

RECOVERIES IN RELIGION

BOOKS BY RALPH W. SOCKMAN

RECOVERIES IN RELIGION

THE PARADOXES OF JESUS

MEN OF THE MYSTERIES

SUBURBS OF CHRISTIANITY

MORALS OF TOMORROW

THE UNEMPLOYED CARPENTER

RECOVERIES IN RELIGION

By
RALPH W. SOCKMAN



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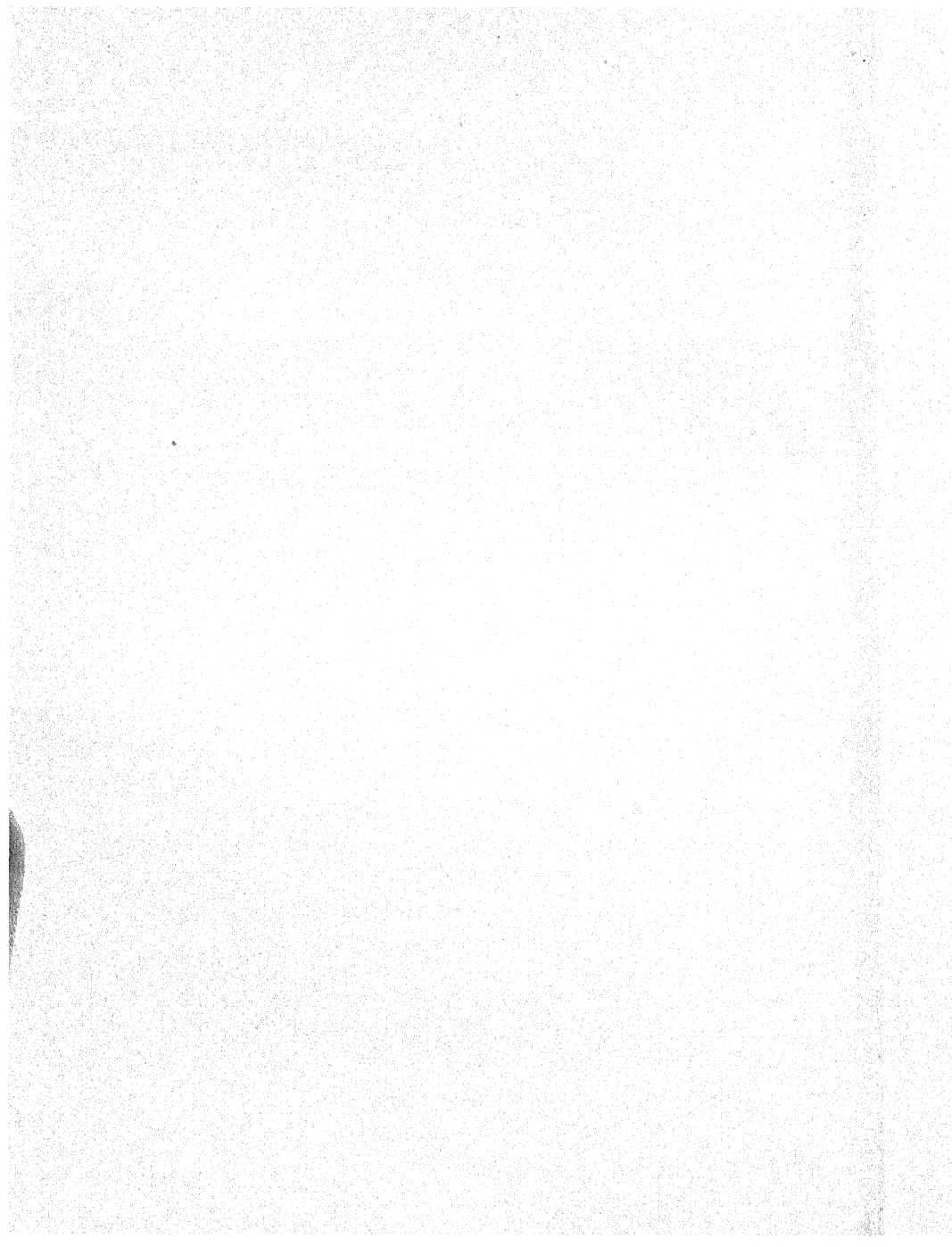
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Dedicated to My

FATHER AND MOTHER



FOREWORD

"WHEN the devil is sick, the devil a saint would be." According to this aphorism, our sick society should have staged a religious revival during this decade of the Great Depression. But has it? How is the business barometer related to the spiritual weather? Are the forces of recovery at work in religion? Or are men turning their backs on the Church as a road to redemption, even as an escape from wreckage?

Such questions have called forth these discussions. This book is neither a reporter's survey of the whole religious scene nor a specialist's attempt to outline an ecclesiastical New Deal. It is the effort of a minister, working amid contemporary currents, to point the directions which give most promise of advance. Admitting the limitations of outlook in one whose entire ministry has been spent in a single parish, may he remind his readers that his church stands near a building bearing over its portals these words, "The Gateway of a Continent." This is the voice of one crying in the wilderness of men at the threshold of our Western world.

While these pages grew out of the Quillian Lectures given at Emory University, they embody materials shared with fellow ministers at the theological seminaries of Auburn, Bangor, Boston, Drew, and Oberlin; also at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and at

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various clerical conferences. For the guiding reactions of these groups the author is sincerely grateful.

Special thanks are due to President Harvey W. Cox of Emory University, whose presence on the platform during the delivery of the lectures insured a splendid student response; to Doctors Franklin N. Parker, Henry B. Trimble, Lavens Thomas III, and other faculty members who so graciously demonstrated the traditional Southern hospitality.

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RALPH W. SOCKMAN.

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Thanksgiving Day
1937

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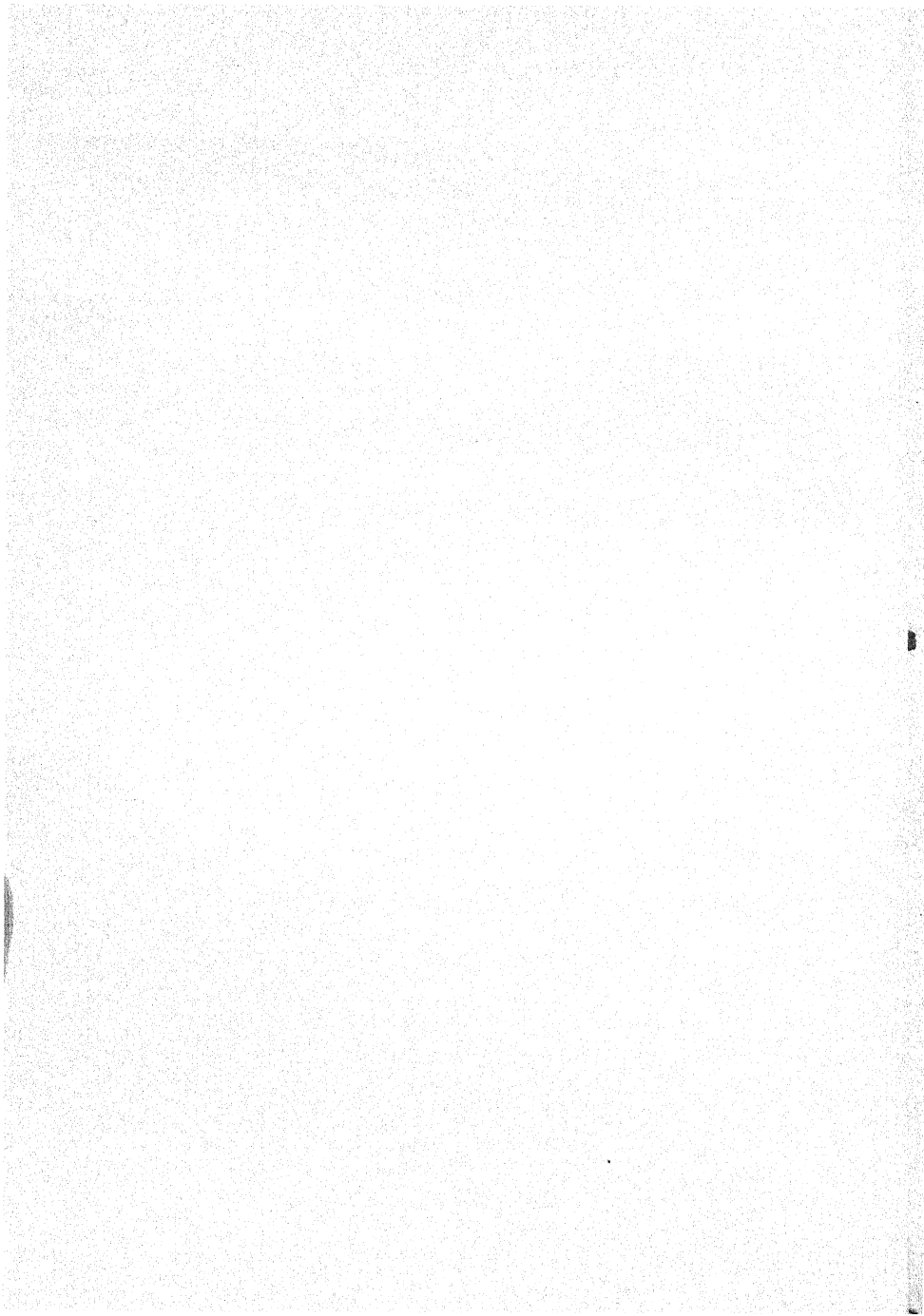
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I. THE RECOVERY OF AUTHORITY

1. Lost Clues
2. Lost Leaders
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I. THE RECOVERY OF AUTHORITY

1. LOST CLUES

THOSE who have grown up during the post-war period are frequently termed "the lost generation." This label is hardly correct if used in the sense of what a Jonathan Edwards would mean by "lost souls." In view of the highly colored and increasingly complex temptations which play upon them, the present young people display a sin-resistance quite comparable to that of their predecessors.

Nor does their "lostness" consist in their inability to be found. With their youth conferences and youth movements, they are probably the most visible and vocal generation ever on this planet. Measured in effort and money, more attention is being given to the problems of young people than ever before.

It would also be inaccurate as well as unwelcome to call our contemporary youth "lost sheep." They do not appear either frightened or frantic. They know their way around their immediate environment more adeptly than did their parents at the same age.

There is a sense, however, in which our post-war folk, both young and old, may be labeled a "lost generation." We have lost the clues to the larger maps of life. It is

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as if the neat prewar philosophies of life, like the map of Europe, had been ripped to pieces with a giant jig saw and handed back to us in the form of a picture puzzle. "Our fathers lived in a world; but our generation has been living in a stream. . . . Change is the only permanent certainty—this paradox has been the final formula for our world-view. . . . (The) sense of stability and of anchorage has been loosened where it has not been destroyed."¹

We are, as it were, passengers on a ship which has slipped anchor and is drifting. We know our way around the boat. We can make life on deck agreeable, often even gay, but we have lost the old sense of direction which was sure that we were headed upstream toward an eventual Utopia called the Kingdom of God. In fact, there seems to be a prevailing pessimism among the passengers that we are drifting downward.

This change of mood may be observed by contrasting themes treated by leading prewar English writers with those of significant writers since the War. Whereas the elders like Galsworthy, Kipling, and Shaw were concerned with schemes for rearranging surface relationships of society, the younger authors have dug down to bedrock questions involving the validity of ideals, of love, of life. Ours is a society from which the bottom seems dropped.

When in our bewilderment we look around for the lost clues we cannot find them in economic formulas now offered for the reconstruction of society. While we read

¹ Notes will be found at end of book, beginning on page 281.

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that Russian youth are discovering a substitute religion in their Soviet program, we have frequent intimations that, even under the feverish glow of their social enthusiasm, many share the feeling of the young Russian described by Sholom Asch in *Three Cities*. After watching and working with the revolutionists for a time, he was haunted by ancient questions about immortality and divine purpose. These queries would not down, despite the assertions of his comrades that the old-fashioned questions of God and the soul did not count in the building of a brave new world. Asch interprets the lad as confessing that he felt like the woman who said, "I have thrown away the bedding and now I have to recover the feathers one by one."

Neither are the lost clues being found in nationalism, which has been called "man's other religion." While Germany, trying to make a new god in her own image, has aroused an evangelistic fervor for her Nordic religious myth, the whole spectacle has more than one suggestion of comic opera, except for the fact of its deep underlying tragedy. There are sufficient eruptions of resistance to indicate the volcanic restlessness beneath the surface of the Nazi régime and to remind a watching world that the spiritual aspirations of a great people cannot be satisfied by a narrow nationalism.

Anglo-Saxon countries are less likely than German to be satisfied with nationalistic schemes. They may turn to New Deals for political gains, but hardly with Mesianic hopes. We may stir patriotism with slogans of "America First," but we parents distinguish between the altar of country and the altar of God. Called to sacrifice

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children for the country's honor, many may do so, but hardly again will they think they are devoting them to God. One father of forty asserts events have cleared away the fog shrouding certain fallacies, even if they do not show how to gain true goals. "My generation," he insists, "was all dressed up and sent to the trenches, to hell. This generation is all dressed up—and no place to go, no job, no clear-cut destiny."

Turning from economic and political guides to physical sciences, we find their authoritative voices muted by a new modesty. Our scientists have come to realize that their efficiency in finding facts does not guarantee the power to give values. They must either enlarge the scope of science to include the sphere of values, if that be possible, or else subordinate themselves to some higher form of knowledge. "Behaviorism" as a theory of action, and "Naturalism" as a theory of the universe, are now unmasked as inadequate. They leave out too much of the rich, complex totality of life. Life, larger than logic, is not to be caught by the camera of mathematical equations.

By such guides thus baffled, religion is challenged to come to the rescue. Not yet has it spoken with an authority that wins general trust. As Douglas Horton puts it, the church has fallen into the imperative mood in place of the indicative. It has resorted to commands since it could not convince. An editor, reporting the Student Volunteer Convention of 1936, said that the old convictions which gave rise and form to the movement in earlier college generations have ceased to work. As a result of this hesitant mood, "the convention pre-

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sented the appearance of a public island of dogmatic assurance surrounded by a sea of questioning as regards any program of action." ² However correct that picture of the convention, the fact is that religion, which once directed much the total social process, has been demoted to compete with other interests. Whereas religion once overarched all man's concerns, life has been fenced off into departments, of which religion is but one, taking its place alongside the economic, the political, and others. And to these others man now gives more and more of his attention and through them he seeks to satisfy more and more of his needs. This demotion from a synthesizing force to a competing department constitutes what John Dewey calls "the greatest revolution that has taken place in religions during the thousands of years that man has been upon earth." ³

At last there now appears in many circles a new insistence in the search for life's lost clues.

One is the awakening interest in theology. Once queen of the sciences, it has suffered the fate of many sovereigns. Now a neglected subject, it has gone down before rising social forces, even in seminaries erected for its study. In a recent inaugural at Princeton Seminary President John Mackay develops the thesis: "Our major intellectual need is theology, great theology, theology that brings to a focus the rays of light that streamed from above in Jesus Christ along the line of the vertical and continue to come to us through Him, and that transmits these rays as undimmed as possible, to every sphere of life and thought across the wide plane of the horizontal." ⁴

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This theological interest manifests itself even in liberal seminaries noted for emphasis on social ethics. Whether this theological trend will cut the nerve of social passion and cause the abandonment of the objective scientific method will depend on those who direct it, but its existence proves that men are seeking a larger map of life than that offered by economic and other programs.

This search for patterns of purpose and meaning is being revived in the field of education as well as of theology. This explains in part the attention given to the theories of Chicago University's young President Hutchins. However questionable may be his suggested cures, his diagnosis of the school situation is accurate when he points out that university instruction has become encyclopedic in range but devoid of unifying principles. Our vast factories of learning have become department stores of factual data, offering courses on every conceivable subject from cow-milking to cosmic rays. But a student often becomes so lost in the maze of information that he emerges without any purposeful plan for his life or any sure sense of moral direction. Can our complex modern training be a scene simplified into some such pattern as that to which the Greeks reduced their compact little world? That is the question President Hutchins is raising. It is significant of the current search for life's lost clues.

Seeking is noted in the field of sciences. Why does the reading public turn avidly to utterances of Eddington and Jeans, Compton and Millikan? Is it not because these men are scientific philosophers, interpreting the meaning of the phenomena which our telescopes and

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microscopes reveal? As our sciences rise to higher levels of maturity, they try to deal with organic relations, not merely with mechanistic connections. Physics is already attaining to that mature stage. Biology is passing into it. Psychology is moving in the same direction.

Ours is a generation that calls for history in outline form, that devours metaphysics when reduced to *The Story of Philosophy*. This demand for knowledge in capsule form may be partly due to the desire to have it light enough that "he who runs may read." Yet it is also partly due to a craving for knowledge so condensed that he who reads may know whither he is running.

Hervey Allen makes a cynical old trader in Havana say to young Anthony Adverse: "You are a type. You are very practical and yet you are always aware of the mystery of things. You have not yet made up your mind what the world is like or what you are. . . . Unless you come to some conclusion about yourself and the world, you will be a mere wanderer."⁵ These words spoken in fiction to a youth of a century gone fitly apply to "the lost generation" of our day.

2. LOST LEADERS

ONCE upon a time the first place to which people turned in periods of bewilderment was the pulpit. The preacher was regarded as the arbiter of culture and the oracle of wisdom. His office clothed him with an aura of sanctity. He was a "man of God." To those who accepted the doctrine of apostolic succession he appeared possessed of divine grace; and even to others he represented an ancient institution, and as such was entitled to homage. His superior educational equipment lifted him above the general level of his hearers. In many a place the parish pastor was the first scholar of the community. He was, also, interpreter of an infallible Book.

Various influences conspired to topple the preacher from this pedestal of authority. The growing spirit of intellectual inquiry challenged the claims of sanctity, and the acids of modernity dissolved some of the distinctions between sacred and secular. The principle of institutional investiture from above grew less popular as people turned toward democratic government. When the divine right of kings passed, the divine rights of the pulpit were bound to be questioned.

Moreover, the rising tide of public education submerges any mental superiorities of the clergy. From his status as the best-educated person in the community, the preacher falls frequently below the level of many

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in his congregation. Moreover, the increasing specialization of education heightens the minister's handicaps. In order to interest his hearers he must speak with some reference to their fields of endeavor; and in order to hold their intellectual respect, he has to speak with accuracy. To reveal ignorance of another's specialty by some illustration raises in the latter's mind a doubt as to the preacher's authority in his own field.

It must be admitted also that in trying to apply religion to the widening interests of men, preaching often spreads itself too thin. By hasty, ill-considered utterances, based perhaps on insufficient data, the pulpit often forfeits the respect of careful thinkers. Some time ago the *New Yorker* printed a list of public issues on which a certain minister had expressed himself during a single year. The listing of them proved how the preacher had veered with every passing wind of popular interest. After a speaker has exhibited himself as a weathercock, it is hard to convince the thoughtful that he is a guidepost.

Then, too, the divisions within churches have weakened their claim to authority. When religious factions assert the divine backing for their divergent positions, it is natural that the public should question whether any one of them is the voice of God's will. Stephen Benet's picture of the puzzled Lincoln beset by a barrage of divine interpreters is a memorable illustration:

"They come to me and talk about God's will
In righteous deputations and platoons,
Day after day, laymen and ministers,
Defining me God's will and Horace Greeley's.

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God's will is General This and Senator That,
God's will is those poor colored fellows' will.
It is the will of the Chicago churches.
It is this man's and his worst enemy's.
But all of them are sure they know God's will.
I am the only one who does not know it." ¹

Herein is revealed a factor with which biographers should reckon when they take up the time-worn question why Lincoln never joined a church. It suggests a reason for many a person's refusal to accept the authority of the pulpit.

While the Church was losing public respect for its authority through the minister's handicaps, the increase of its divisions and the heat of its dissensions, science was steadily rising in popular regard. Science seemed cool and impartial; religion appeared hot-headed and partisan. The very word "science" came to have a kind of magic for the man in the street. If a scientist gained repute in any field, he was assumed to have authoritative knowledge in religious matters. Thus a Burbank or an Edison speaking on immortality would outweigh a thousand Easter sermons.

Then came the War, which heightened the prestige of the scientist and lowered the authority of the Church. Our physical sciences were dependable instruments in conducting war; the churches were badly broken reeds. The pulpits took their cues from their respective governments. Under pressure of war, they repudiated most of the tenets which they had defended during peace. The Church put on the whole armor of—Mars. When chaplains on each side piously told the men about to

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die that their cause was God's will, it is little wonder that the comrades who escaped raised the question as to whether either side knew God's will. During the War the Church was damned as weak-livered if it stuck to "the simple gospel" instead of dealing with public duties. In time of peace, when the Church tries to treat civic questions, it is damned as a meddler and told to stick to the "simple gospel." After the Church has thus been the football of politicians and militarists, it is hard to reassert its authority as the spokesman of God.

Embarrassed by its failure in the crisis of war, the Church began to examine itself for the cause. Up rose the party of the Fundamentalists to place the blame on the Modernists, who had forsaken the teachings of orthodoxy and flirted with the heresies of science. On the other hand, the Modernists were quick to ascribe the cause of failure to outmoded concepts of rational religion which failed to hold the scientifically trained minds. The impression made on the public mind by heated controversy is revealed in the following press report of a religious group meeting in New York: "When they come to deal with the disagreement on an article of doctrine, they are filled with bitterness and eaten with hate. Not one note of the humility of Jesus is found in the speeches of these men. Not one note of charity. Not one note of forgiveness. Not one note of gentleness. But instead, curses and pugnacity, fire and brimstone, and all uncharitableness." ²

As always, that fight within the Church was made a holiday by critics and skeptics. How many were alienated from religion by the spectacle cannot be computed.

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In time the hot spot of controversy shifted to new tensions created by economic and social conditions. The excitement of the Dayton Trial seems almost as distant as Dowieism. The issue of import now is not man's animal origin but man's social destiny, not whether man is the product of ascent or descent, but whether he is now on the way up or down. The Fundamentalists of the 1920's do not even find a place in current controversies. "Not a single old-style orthodox thinker can be found in the thick of present-day discussion. He could not possibly participate intelligently in it if he brought unchanged his orthodox presuppositions." ³

While the field of battle has been left to the liberals, division is now within their ranks. Older orthodoxy is felt to be too hollow; older liberalism is regarded as too shallow. A most marked phenomenon of our time is the repudiation of "liberalism" by the advanced and most widely heard religious spokesmen of our day. Each new writer seems to vie with his predecessors in denouncing "liberalism" until the attitude has reached the degree of an "anti-liberal animus."

The lost leadership of yesterday's liberalism is ascribed to its easy-going optimism regarding man's control of his own destiny through creative intelligence. Made confident by the steadily mounting prosperity of Western industrial nations, made mellow in conscience by growing gifts to charity, made urbane by spreading scenes of culture and humanitarianism, the liberals felt themselves on the way to an earthly paradise, possible through the aid of science and machinery.

Their liberal concepts, says Walter Horton, are now

as dead as the shibboleths of the Gnostics and the Arians, "though they have only just died and their flesh is still warm. They have not died as the result of any concerted effective attack on their validity, but simply as the result of a general change in the intellectual climate." ⁴

It is almost twenty years since General Jan Christian Smuts struck off his oft-quoted epigram, "Humanity has struck its tents and is on the march." The two post-war decades reveal, however, that movement does not necessarily mean advance. Our recent position has had some striking parallels to the Age of Reason following the French Revolution. In 1794 one of the most optimistic books ever penned was written by Condorcet with the title *A Sketch of a Tableau of the Progress of the Human Spirit*. The author pictured the speedy spread of knowledge and prosperity by means of the printing press and the other inventions making for human intercourse. As a result the earth was to be cleansed of crime, servitude, poverty, and war. Scarcely, however, had Condorcet finished his book when he was thrown into prison by the more radical exponents of his much-vaunted "rights of man." The next morning he was found dead, most probably from self-administered poison. The death of Condorcet was almost a portent of the collapse of his prophecy. The Age of Reason deteriorated into a Reign of Terror. After that came Napoleon.

Is today's trend in the same direction? At any rate, yesterday's easy-going guides to Utopia are lost leaders.

3. THE LOVE AND THE LIMITS OF LIBERTY

IF the repudiation of recent liberalism becomes a retreat from liberty, the result will be a rout rather than a recovery. Liberty is the native air of Christianity. The inaugural address of Jesus at Nazareth, as reported by Luke, was in the nature of an "Emancipation Proclamation." Jesus came to "proclaim release to the captives," "to set at liberty them that are bruised." From the sunny hills of his Galilean ministry to the shadows of Pilate's court, there was about Jesus an air of freedom.

The Founder of Christianity did not begin his program of liberation by removing external restraints. He did not start by trying to destroy the existing government or by leading an economic revolution. He worked on the principle of imparting a leaven which would rise to push back external strictures, thus avoiding that dangerous vacuum which results when outer restraints are removed before inner purposes and incentives are developed. The peril of the cleaned and empty house which became refilled with worse spirits than before is a danger which has been repeated in the struggles for liberty, even down to the day of the German debacle when the emptiness which followed the expulsion of Kaiserism became filled with the new ferment of Nazism.

Jesus began not by leading a revolt against Caesar,

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but by putting such a sense of personal worth into the human heart that the rising leaven of liberty would burst the bonds of Caesarism. And this is what has happened through the centuries. The shore of life's unresting sea is strewn with the shells of those restrictions which Christ's followers have outgrown. Though the civilization which followed in their footsteps is yet far from Christian, nevertheless His leavening impulse has produced in part abolition of human slavery, emancipation of women, concern for child welfare, rise of democracy, and the recent determined assault on war. Every genuine recovery of Christ's spirit results in larger liberty.

If in the present loss of clues and leaders we retire to safety zones of a merely comforting mysticism or to smaller quarters of traditional conservatism—that will not be religious victory.

Liberty, however, has lately revealed mistakes, even crimes, committed in its name. Broad ways which gave promise of the free life have proved to be byroads which grow narrower and harder, and, like Balaam of old, men are learning from asininity that such roads are impassable. This is plain, for instance, in the sphere of personal self-expression. We have learned that when we live for the pleasures of the moment, our pleasures prove but momentary. When we live on the principle of doing what we please, we soon are no longer pleased with what we do. Wiser ones are coming to see that desire for liberty must be tested by the question whether it is a wish to be free to rise or to let down. Freedom to let down eventually leaves us on those low levels of the

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"far country" where our prodigal spirits fain would feed themselves on husks which animal nature finds satisfying. Such living leaves us with "a lean and hungry look."

Seldom has the emptiness of such existence been better described than by H. G. Wells' picture of The Young Man about Town in *The Research Magnificent*: "He saw it all as a joyless indulgence, as a confusion of playthings and undisciplined desires, as a succession of days that began amiably and weakly, that became steadily more crowded with ignoble and trivial occupations, that had sunken now to indignity and uncleanness. . . . By some trick of the imagination he saw life as an interminable Bond Street, lit up by night lamps, desolate, full of rubbish, . . . trapping, temptations, and down it all he drove as the damned drive, wearily, inexplicably. . . . And then suddenly he reached out his arms in the darkness and prayed aloud to the silences. 'Oh, God! Give me back my visions! Give me back my visions!'"¹

In the case of family as well as of individual, there is undeniable awakening to the law of liberty. The modern home has moved far from the regimenting restrictions of the old-fashioned household. Yet certain danger-signals begin to be recognized. In a symposium some time ago Dean Hawkes of Columbia pointed out that the home of today makes a more difficult problem for the school than did our fathers' homes. In the former days the family was the functioning unit and the individual member was expected to gear into its group activity. In the home of today, the individual is the

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unit, and round him the family revolves, with the result that youth come up to college never having learned group action. Such individualistic young persons create a hard problem for the campus in developing social co-ordination.

The dean's remark reveals the pendulum has swung too far in an effort to make the home "child-centered." While the old regimentation was often wooden, making the child in truth "a chip off the old block," the new parenthood has at times been so anxious to develop the child's bents that he becomes difficult for any school to straighten out. Though a democratic spirit should be in the home, the nursery is scarcely the place to put into practice the Wilsonian doctrine of pure democracy which guarantees "the rights of small bodies to govern themselves." The ideal home is appearing as neither a paternalism of parents nor a bolshevism of youth, but a partnership of free minds in which experiences of the elders supplement and guide experiments of the younger.

Against the individualistic type of freedom in the family Dr. Henry C. Link brings to bear the testimony of a practicing psychologist. "The child," he says, "develops a good personality, or at least the foundations of such a personality, by doing many things which he does not do naturally and many things which he actually dislikes." ²

The home is the first training ground in those squad movements of personal action which fit man for the front-line advances of social progress. Like the raw recruits in the army camps of the recent War, we are

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eager to move up to the front lines, where we can attack such social enemies as war, industrial injustice, racial discrimination. Young people, especially, rally to those issues. A chief hindrance is that we have not done the local drilling necessary to prepare us for effective social action. Much of our social lag today is due to a kind of moral awkwardness. We have the impulses but not the skill for concerted achievement. Our society needs what the child needs to bring it through the awkward age—namely, a local drill ground and personal guidance. The first of these local training grounds is the home.

A second is the school. Here, too, are the love and the limits of liberty. Our progressive schools have turned from the old schoolmaster attitude of "handing things down," whether it be in realm of rules of conduct or in facts of information. The prevailing technique is the project method wherein teacher and pupils are fellow-seekers after knowledge. We make much of the fact that American public schools are free—free not only as open to the poorest without price, but also as safeguarded against indoctrination by economic or religious influence. The aim is to teach youth how to think and to leave them free to determine what to think.

But with all our boasted freedom of education, the degree of truly free thinking in our school products is rather disappointing. Some time ago an interesting test was tried on a group of students. A list of words was submitted and the pupils were asked to consider each word for not more than five seconds, crossing out every word which was more annoying than pleasing,

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more antagonizing than appealing. The list follows: "Nordic, Jew, disarmament, Protestant, World Court, Roman Catholic, foreigner, Japanese, radical." Such a test reveals how much of our thinking is conditioned by prejudice and party spirit, by ignorance and fear.

The man on the street, who is also the man in the ballot box, is frequently about as free as the stray dog which, having no master, takes up with any passerby, even a tramp. The elective system in education and in politics has limitations in its liberty-giving power. The college freshman of seventeen is scarcely able to be the final judge of what at seventy he will wish that he had studied. We rightly repudiate the goose-stepping regimentation of much European education, but our emphasis on liberty often results in mere mental and moral laxity. Human freedom is awkward amateurishness unless those who try to exercise it learn the use of personal powers as the musician acquires the full free use of his instrument. This requires discipline. The creaking defects of our democratic institutions reveal how little way we have come toward such ideal of disciplined freedom.

In the Church, as in the school and the home, the leaven of liberty has been at work, breaking through rigidities of dogmatic teaching and dictatorial method. The virtue of obedience is so unpopular that it seldom figures in contemporary preaching. Laymen trained in the project method at school and college do not long tolerate thundering dogmatisms from the pulpit. The minister is still called the shepherd of his flock, but few of his people are sheepish enough to follow him unless

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he can first persuade their liberty-loving minds. Since modern congregations wish to think they are thinking for themselves, however slight their proof of thought, ministers must give them the benefit of the doubt.

This, however, often results in the preacher giving them the benefit of his doubts, which is no benefit at all. The tentative type of preaching, which frequently poses as thoughtful and liberal, does not hold even the liberals. It is a matter of record that those religious groups which stress their extreme individual liberty are making little headway today.

The elective system has its limitations in religion as in education. The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. The Nazarene pattern is a Kingdom of God, not a democracy of God, because there are some realities which we do not decide by majority but discover in the nature of things. The little boy put the truth naively when he said, "There is something in me that I can't do what I want to with." Liberty lives by conformity to some laws which men do not make or change.

The injunction of James' Epistle, therefore, comes with imperative force at this time, "So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." We must either discipline ourselves by the Christian law of liberty or deteriorate into that laxity from which the reaction is to despotic authority. The present dictatorships of Europe arose out of the chaos of individualism.

Archbishop Temple defines freedom to be "determination by what seems good as contrasted with determi-

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nation by irresistible compulsion.”³ Jesus advocated self-determination “by what seems good,” but in determining what is good, he taught that the doer must have the same sensitive regard (love) for his neighbor as for himself. Hence it follows for the Christian that as neighbors become nearer and more numerous, the considerations as to what is good become more subtle and complex. Thus, freedom of action becomes a more complicated matter in crowded modern society than on sparsely settled frontiers of a former time. Here in America we can no longer say to those who feel restless and restricted, “Go west and grow up with the country.” We have to find our freedom within settled and congested communities.

In the horse-and-buggy era, a person could drive along a country road about as he pleased, stopping or going at will; but a motorist cannot loiter at leisure in the Holland Tunnel or drive at pleasure on Fifth Avenue. In the old days of the country store, the owner could keep it open at all hours and pay his clerks whatever they might agree on between themselves. Hours and wages were their own business. Today when men do business in nation-wide markets they have to play the game according to rules laid down by trade associations, trade unions, and government regulations. In the time of Longfellow’s Village Blacksmith, the smithy was his own master and could strike off when he pleased. The men who now work in large factories are cogs in a huge machine. The stopping of a few may tie up a whole plant.

Truly we have become “members one of another,”

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not in New Testament sense but in machine-age reality. The welfare of each is bound up with the others as parts of a living body. We must find our freedom within the corporate life of the body politic. This is the struggle which is to test the endurance of a democratic nation, "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

At the moment the struggle is not going well. Those of us fortunate enough to own cars wish to drive them with the freedom of the horse-and-buggy age. Those of us rich enough to run a business wish to operate it with the personal liberty of the country store. Those of us who are employed desire to work or not work on the individualistic basis of the village blacksmith. We are a stubborn people, insisting on our rights and disregarding rights of others, getting into strategic places and blocking wheels of industry and roads of progress.

We are creating a social strain by increasing external compulsions without developing inner controls. We multiply laws to restrain others. We tax ourselves to the back-breaking point to provide bureaus and officials for enforcing these increasing laws. Then with it all, we take law into our own hands as vigilantes or resort to violence. Our heritage of democratic principles and government is now in such jeopardy that we must either recover the authority that makes for liberty or surrender to the authority made by dictatorships.

4. THE SEARCH FOR CERTAINTY AND AUTHORITY

TO a world weary with wandering in the desert of theories and amid the mirages of hope, those religious movements which offer certainty make an intense appeal. Thus many in Europe are reported as turning to Roman Catholicism, whose institutional vastness and enduring antiquity make it seem to them like an ark of safety alongside the fragile craft of the smaller Protestant communions. In Germany the post-war spirit of frustration and defeat naturally gave an appeal to Barthianism with its passive receptive faith in divine revelation and intervention. From the same root desire for certainty stems in part the appeal of the Oxford Group Movement with its serene confidence in God's guidance.

Uncertainty is an attitude with varying degrees of intensity. In mild form it may be merely an intellectual curiosity which gently teases the mind; in its starker aspects it runs the gamut even to agonizing suspense, torturing the spirit. The scientific spirit of inquiry is a calm incentive compared to the anxious questing of religion. This fact helps to explain the heat so frequently engendered in religious controversies. One may keep as cool as a cash register in discussing the theory of numbers, although all scientists do not show themselves so mentally air-conditioned. When we turn to the veracity of the Gospels or the Virgin Birth we leave

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the stratosphere of cold facts and descend to the zone of values enveloping the ground on which we stand, constituting the atmosphere which is our breath of life.

It is this element of values which intensifies the degrees of uncertainty and of certainty. Absolute certainty can be demonstrated only in a realm of facts from which all questions of value have been eliminated. A chemist can prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the food on a table is pure, but he cannot prove with any such finality that it is good. Its goodness is a matter of evaluation by the eater, and personal equations of taste vary even as to the simplest objects. Though a person may feel certain about his conscious experience, including the element of values, there is such inevitable subjectivity in these value judgments that he cannot impart to others the verifiable proof of his evidence. Hence, when we start on the search for religious certainty and authority, we must realize that we travel in the realm of values and cannot, therefore, demonstrate absolute proof.

A second thought reveals that we would not desire such evidence even if it were available. As George Eliot suggested in her story, *The Lifted Veil*, such guaranteed knowledge would remove from life the lure of adventure and the zest of discovery. To be "dead certain" would be deadly. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," is a truth of wider application than to the particular doubt of Thomas. The requirement of mathematical proof in our Heavenly Father's house would be as out of place as in an earthly home. The fineness of filial love would be destroyed

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if sons sought and secured objective guarantees of their father's rewards. It is the lack of absolute certainty which makes possible faith and love.

In our search for the practical, rather than the absolute certainty possible in religious experience, we should recognize limits of the scientific method. Our aim should be to sight the roads to discovery rather than to try to cite the proofs in advance. A college professor some time ago passed a trenchant criticism which contains wholesome counsel on current college preaching. He expressed the wish that preachers who come to the campus would spend less time trying to prove the existence of God and more time to help students make contact with the God that is.

Nevertheless, to recognize limits of scientific proof is not to abandon that method in our search for religious experience and authority. There is danger that in the current revolt against the tyranny of the physical sciences and the vogue of liberalism, religion may revert to obscure orthodoxy or surrender to the intellectual defeatism of the Barthians or fly off on a tangent of emotional mysticism lacking control of disciplined reason. "Man," says Middleton Murry, "cannot accept certainties; he must discover them."¹ The dictatorial types of authority now popular in many circles have no lasting place in genuine religious recovery, for the scientific method is so established in the public mind that any theological or mystical interest which retreats from it will lose the respect of the majority.

On the contrary, we must keep and cultivate the scientific spirit in religious investigation until we win

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public regard for accuracy that some workers have gained in other fields. When men turn their ears from the spokesmen of science to the voices of religion, many think they enter a region that is vague, intangible, subjective, where one guess is as good as another. The scientist is popularly supposed to start with open mind, find out the facts, and then form conclusions; the theologian is popularly believed to start with the thesis which he wishes to prove and then to look around for data to support it. These presuppositions must be counteracted by keeping the doors open between the scientist's laboratory and the minister's study. The sane seeker for religious certainty does not outrage science. He outruns it.

There is a certain democratic basis of appeal in establishing religious authority. Jesus in his parables tried to provoke individual thought and awaken intuitive assent to his teachings. "Why judge ye not of yourselves what is right?" is a question characteristic of One who recognized the part which the seeker must play in finding truth. Divine authority and religious certainty cannot be externally forced on free minds.

On the other hand, Jesus did not overestimate the accuracy of private judgment. He did not teach that men could enroll in his school on a purely elective basis. He stressed obedience and humility, the yoke and the cross as elements in divine discipleship. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

Religious certainty is the flash of conviction which comes when the divine initiative meets with minds attuned. There are tests of attunement and also of

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validity of response. "Convincing religious authority must speak out of the experience of our actual human life and conditions. . . . It must also be an authority which invites investigation and collaboration. . . . It must also be an authority which ministers to further progress and encourages the explaining of the ways of God with men. . . . Finally, it is an authority that uses personal experience, or the process of rediscovering the truth about God in ourselves, as its organ and instrument." ²

The seeker for truth in religion as in science starts with the spirit of an explorer. In doing so he is loyal to the temper of Christianity's Founder.

Jesus aroused the spirit of quest in alert minds. Recall that day when he was walking along the Jordan and observed two men following him. He turned and asked, "What seek ye?" They countered with a question, "Rabbi, where abidest thou?" He replied, "Come, and ye shall see." They went—fellow explorers on a new spiritual journey, the end of which they could not foresee.

Think of the publican Levi who had a lucrative and secure, if not popular, job as tax collector. He watched Jesus passing his customs office, and longings after a larger life began to stir within him. Soon Levi left his imprisoning chrysalis and winged his way forth to follow a leader who had not "where to lay his head."

There was something about the Master which appealed to men's love of adventure. He not only kindled the exploring spirit with his presence, but he specifically counseled it with his words. He set off the human

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springs of investigation with such commands as "Seek, and ye shall find," "Knock, and it shall be opened." Jesus' counsel was just the opposite of a modern English novelist who says, "One-fourth of life is intelligible, the other three-fourths is unintelligible; and our earliest duty is to cultivate the habit of not looking round the corner." The Master on his part set men looking round the corners of life's uncertainties. He knew that

"Men are homesick in their homes,
And strangers under the sun,
And they lay their heads in a foreign land
Whenever the day is done."

Jesus put men on the scent of an unattained beyond. He held before them the prospectus of a New Jerusalem, a Kingdom of God.

Unless a person has enough of the hero in him to try this exploring spirit, he does not get very far in his search for the working certainties of life. Some time ago, the writer sat by the bedside of a young man whom the jinx of misfortune had pursued with a long series of accidents till his faith had been shattered. The world appeared to him a cruel impersonal machine. "If there is a God," he said, "why does He not show Himself?" The young man's trouble was that his mind was in the same position as his body—that is, flat on its back. Lying on its back, his mind expected God to come and reveal Himself. God cannot prove Himself to minds prone on their backs. He shows Himself to prodigals returning home with prayers on their lips. He shows Himself to men who start out searching for Him, by

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acting as if He were and saying, "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." God reveals Himself to men like Tennyson's Arthur Hallam, who

"Fought his doubts and gathered strength.
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of his mind
And laid them; thus he came at length
To find a stronger faith his own."

The first requisite in starting on the search for certainty is this affirmative spirit of the explorer, this "will to believe." All that we have a need or right to know is enough to start with. As Saint Francis said, "We know as much as we do." We come and see. We "walk in the light" and into the light. "He that is of the truth heareth my voice."

It is told of Holman Hunt that before his painting of Christ at the door was put on public exhibition, he invited a company of friends to view it privately. One of them called Hunt aside and asked if the artist had not made a serious omission in drawing the door without any latch on the outside. The painter replied that there is no latch on the divine side of the door at which the Christ spirit knocks. That door can be opened only from man's side.

5. THE AUTHORITY OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

THE search for religious certainty begins and eventually ends with individual experience. The rays of divine revelation usually come to us not directly but as reflections from the experiences of others. With most of us our first religious authority was a mother or father, a friend or teacher.

Daily living is built increasingly on the authority of other persons. Though the scientific spirit inclines us to challenge authorities, modern science has so departmentalized its specialties that we have to depend more and more on the word of others. In his preface to *Saint Joan* Bernard Shaw says: "The ablest and most independent thinkers are content to understand their own special department. In other departments they will unhesitatingly ask for and accept the instructions of a policeman or the advice of a tailor without demanding or desiring explanations." ¹

The skeptical and sophisticated ones who challenge religious authority vociferously still avidly accept the word of our secular oracles. Some years ago a college president was reported to say that the modern preachers who came to his campus seemed to have found a new Trinity consisting of Krutch, Lippmann, and Mencken. Might it not, therefore, be claimed that the principle of personal authority is quite as valid in the religious realm as in the secular? A saint is as authoritative a

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guide to life's higher values as an art expert is to the worth of paintings. Thomas Carlyle, confessing that his mother's reverence started a Holy of Holies in his own being, or a Richard Larue Swain, telling how he got his first glimpse of God as a boy with his head in mother's lap watching her face become relaxed and peaceful during prayer—these are giving no greater evidence of gullibility than are college students who absorb their value judgments from authorities in various fields of study.

Religious authority, however, cannot satisfactorily rest on second-hand experience. When Jesus at Caesarea Philippi asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I the Son of man am?" he was not content with the mere report of current views. He pressed a second question: "But who say ye that I am?" When Peter came out with his answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus' reply was revealing: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah." Why blessed? "For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." In other words, Peter was not speaking from second-hand report but from first-hand experience.

To such a personally discovered conviction a man has two lines of approach. One is the mystical; the other is the moral.

Although intuition leaves no footprints, we can and do follow it to some extent in even our most practical concerns. No life is so enveloped in material considerations that it has no moments of mystic insight. Lives inured to logic have hours of illumination when the air

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clears, the days of low visibility pass, and the mountain tops of experience break through the fog. After such experiences they understand what Thomas Aquinas meant when he said: "I have seen that which makes all that I have written look small to me." And they do not laugh to scorn this testimony of a modern business man: "After a long time of jangling conflict and inner misery, I, one day, quite quietly and with no conscious effort, stopped doing the disingenuous thing. Then the marvel happened. It was as if a great rubber band which had been stretched almost to the breaking point were suddenly released and snapped back to its normal condition. Heaven and earth were changed for me. Everything was glorious because of its relation to some great central life—nothing seemed to matter but that life."

These intuitive glimpses of reality may come as flashes come from the telegrapher's instrument when the current is interrupted. In some great joy or in some great sorrow, "deep calleth unto deep." When a father holds his firstborn in his arms, he may feel with Tennyson:

"Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see,
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore."

Sometimes the shadow of death clears the eyes dimmed by the sunlight of ease and it happens to us as to Isaiah. "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord." Or the revealing light may break through when the machine-minded city dweller stands on the rim of the

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Grand Canyon and the architecture of the universe lifts his horizon of thought from the ever-ready to the Everlasting.

The forms in which this sense of the holy is felt are as varied as the occasions which induce it. "The feeling of it at times may come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the *soul*, continuing, as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its 'profane' non-religious mood of everyday experience. It may burst in sudden eruptions up from the depths of the soul with spasms and convulsions, or lead to the strangest of excitements, to intoxicated frenzy, to transport and to ecstasy." ²

Whence, however, come these mystical insights? Upon that question depends their value as religious authorities. Are they rockets of fancy shot up by overheated imaginations? Or mirages of hope conjured up by wishful thinking? Or eruptions from the dim subterranean caverns of the Unconscious? How are we to know that our feelings of divine nearness are, as Martineau says, "no transient brush of a fancied angel's wings, but the abiding presence and persuasion of the Soul of Souls"?

Well, it would be a fair, if only fragmentary, answer to say, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Men of the mystic vision are entitled to sing:

"We are the music-makers,
We are the dreamers of dreams,

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Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
We are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever it seems." ³

To say that men of these intuitive insights have been the world's pioneers is of course hardly enough. This mystical wing of the mind must be tested and supplemented by the moral wing if the spirit is to ascend Godward. Mysticism without the moral test and control is not reliable. The Old Testament makes this plain. The progress from the ecstatic babblings of the false prophets in Elijah's day to the stern, moral injunctions of Amos and Micah is one which should be kept ever before us in our present cultivation of the mystical, for there is real danger today of divorcing mysticism from morality. Conscience is the censor without which intuition may degenerate into self-hypnosis and mysticism into emotional effervescence.

When we turn from the mystical to the moral trail in our search for certainty, we find that the authority of the conscience needs to be clarified. It has been heavily befogged by modern sociological and psychological interpretations.⁴ Seeing that ideas of right and wrong change from place to place and period to period, many have concluded that conscience is but the inner reflection of outer custom, that it gets its sanction from the mores of the moment, but lacks any divine authority.

To say, however, that the origin of ought lies in the social patterns of behavior is to overlook the fact that

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conscience has often led men to run counter to contemporary custom. A Savonarola's conscience can hardly be explained as merely an echo of Florentine approval inasmuch as it led him into the fire set by those he was fighting. Conscience does not confine itself to inherited patterns, but shows individual inventiveness, lighting upon new types of action. Conscience is more than the push of social approval. It feels the pull of ideals.

It would be more accurate to say that our mores are the creation of conscience than to assert the reverse. When we cut back through the changing codes of right and wrong, we come to that censoring function integral to human nature which started those moral categories. The originating sense of ought is embedded in the structure of the human constitution.

Men worked out moral laws, but that does not mean that they were inventions of men. Our moral laws came into being just as priceless musical compositions came into being. How was that? The composer did not make the music himself. He released it. He discovered laws of harmony and sound existing in the universe, and he arranged his musical scores in such a way that this harmony and sound could come forth. A musical composition is in part the creation of the composer and in part a revelation of something already created in this world. So with our great moral laws. Law-makers like Moses and the prophets discovered certain principles existing in the heart of man. They formulated laws which would fit those principles which they discovered. Thus the Ten Commandments, for example,

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are in part the creation of man and in part the revelation of something created in man.

"There is such a thing as conscience; what is it? Not a racial memory, but a sense of obligation that lights on this or that course when reflection has detached us for a moment from the clamor of self-interest. Is conscience a luxury, a psychological accident, an economic lubricant, an ephemeral sentiment induced by an indifferent world? Or is it a companionship, an intimation of destiny, a perception that human choices have some bearing upon an eternal order of being? To suppose that in some way conscience represents the nature of things makes all the difference in a man's life; to have such men as its components makes all the difference in the life of a civilization." ⁵

When we thus interpret conscience as the echo of an eternal order rather than of social custom or instinctive desire, we do not thereby raise it to the status of a divinely infallible guide. The voice of conscience has to be translated into value judgments by each receiver, and into those translations error may enter. When conscience speaks, one cannot say with certainty, "Thus saith the Lord." But he can believe that the creator spirit is trying to get some message across to him. It is then for him to use every resource of his reason to interpret that message correctly.

Following the conscience requires using the whole mind. The Chinese have an ancient proverb which says that there are five points to the compass—north, east, south, west, and the point where you are. This fifth point of the compass—that is, the point where you are—

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is perhaps the most important of all. For it does not do much good to know directions unless one also knows his location. Where one is determines in part what is the right direction to take.

This is true morally as well as geographically. Where one is has a bearing on what is the right thing to do. Take a simple illustration: Suppose a person seeing a football player in the lineup, pale and about to faint, said to him, "You look sick; you ought to be in bed." That would be an act of kindness. But suppose one had a friend who was recuperating from a long illness and he were to say to him, "You look sick; you ought to be in bed." That most certainly would not be an act of kindness. The same words in different places have a different moral value.

Consider another case. In 1922, the writer was traveling with a company of American students in the Austrian Tyrol. It was at the time that the Austrian currency, like the German, had depreciated to an almost vanishing value. One night in a public dining place, one of our young American college boys, with a spirit of bravado, took a piece of Austrian currency of high denomination but of little value, rolled it into a taper, and with it lighted his cigarette. That would have been a quite harmless act if done in New York or Boston, but in Austria that night it nearly started a riot. It was a reflection on the national pride of the natives. Yes, the place where you are determines in part the rightness or wrongness of an action. Let there be no misunderstanding here. There are certain universal principles of right and wrong, but their application

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must take into consideration this fifth point of the compass, the place where you are.

Now Professor Einstein, in his theory of relativity, has taught us that time enters into the calculation of place. Since everything is in motion, when we try to locate ourselves we have to take account of the element of time.

This principle is quite as true in the moral as in the physical realm. What is the right direction to take morally is determined in part by date as well as by place. For instance, back in the crude days of the early Old Testament, it was right to take "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Later, after the great Hebrew prophets and Jesus had taught, the Master could say: "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil." The rough retaliation which was right in the days of Samson was no longer right in the time of the higher insights of Jesus. Or take it in our attitudes toward war. Up to 1914 we had done little popular thinking or preaching about war, but since that time we have done much. Positions on war which very good people took for granted twenty years ago are no longer defensible in the light of our peace education and improved international tribunals.

When, therefore, we wish to use the compass of conscience for determining what is the right course of action, we must first locate ourselves in place and time. That being done, our conscience becomes a pretty safe guide. If it does not show us the course all the way through, it at least indicates what is the duty next at

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hand. When we do such duty, we find the fog of uncertainty beginning to lift. Add the compass of conscience with its five points to the heroic spirit of the explorer, and we are ready to use aids outside ourselves in the search for certainty.

6. THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

THE Protestant doctrine of individual priesthood of believers does not imply that believers are always priests. They have long stretches of time when their spirits are mundane, when the sense of certainty deserts, when "the east window of divine surprise" is darkened. Their priestly access to God often should be reopened. The individual religious seeker requires a group experience to correct, safeguard, and reinforce his own.

When believers come together in common search, something is given to the individual through the fellowship. "One loving heart sets another on fire." While at times the individual seems to come closer to God in solitude than in the group, the testimony of experience is, in Evelyn Underhill's words, "ordinary people at all levels help each other to be a little more supernatural than each could have been alone." Entrance into a well-conducted service of public worship is similar to the entrance of a ship into the locks of a canal. The sluice-gate is closed behind the boat, the gate is opened in front of it, and water flows under the keel, lifting it steadily until the ship soon sails away on its new and higher level. So is it with the worshiper. The gate of his mind is closed to selfish interests of his existence, and the sluice-gate of his spirit is opened toward God. Then, through architecture and symbolism, through mu-

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sic and scripture, through prayer and message, the "waters of life" begin to flow under him, lifting his spirits quietly but surely, until an hour later he sets off on a new and higher level, carrying his cargo of private and public responsibilities.

Though conceding this exaltation of spirit, many would dismiss it as a phenomenon of group psychology. To be sure, emotional stimulus is no evidence of religious certainty. A crowd as well as an individual can be fooled. In fact, we are become so aware of mob-mindedness that we tend to be more skeptical of crowd mentality than of solitary thinking. Thus with many the group religious experience weakens, rather than reinforces, the authority of individual experience. Church authority is more suspect today than that of conscience or intuition.

From the shadow of criticism which has fallen heavily on the Church we can and should recover its claim to the authority of an expert. While the authority of investiture has little appeal to liberty-loving minds, the authority of expertness is in line with the scientific spirit. Representatives of the Church will not win wide acceptance by discussions of whose hands were laid on them, but they will command respect by demonstrating their ability to lay healing hands on sore spots of society.

The spokesmen of the Protestant Church can no longer stand like traffic policemen able to stop men by mere raising of hands. They must change their technique from quick arrest to patient appeal. Yet intelligent

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travelers who stop, look, and listen will see grounds for giving ear to the Church as an authority.

The Church does qualify as an expert in spiritual matters. Its numbers are no simple counting of heads with no weighing of them. It carries the weight of collected and tested experience. The Church brings the testimony of the ages to bear on questions of the present. Its creeds mark the roads where past seekers have trod, and while inadequate as definitions, they are invaluable as directions. The art, the literature, the hymnody of the Church fortify the fluctuating faith of the seeker with the consciousness that others have traveled the road before him.

The wisdom of the Church stands to serve each new generation of Christians as a mother's experience is put at her children's disposal. Generally speaking, church ordinances were laid down after long observation of what is best for orderliness and progress. Rules placed upon members are the result of long tests of what proves most healthful. They are the findings in the laboratory of the spirit. They are not restrictions "put over on" us by narrow-minded, old-fashioned fathers of the faith, but rather they are valuable formulas "put over to" us to save us from repeating past mistakes.

The Church can claim even more than mere authority of the expert. While its fellowship has included most of the spiritual aristocracy and its findings represent the wisdom distilled through centuries of devotion, something more than human strength has sustained it through the vicissitudes of the centuries. The Church is no mere "Jesus Society" keeping alive that revered

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name as a Shakespeare Club or Browning Society perpetuates for a time the appreciation of a lustrous figure. The Church is more than a democratic association whose nature is determined by the ideas and doings of its members. From the standpoint of organizational efficiency, the Church has a record of grievous blunders. The practical business men are right in their repeated criticism of the Church's bad management. They are wrong in failing to see that an organization which survives centuries of such bad management must have some force in it greater than human efficiency. Effort to explain the endurance of the Church without divine aid is like trying to explain the rainbow without the sun.

This divine basis of the Church must be recovered if it is to stand up to social cultures which now compromise and corrupt its members. We must recapture a lost note in the appeal made for joining the Church. Men are asked to unite with it on the ground that it needs them. While that is a valid appeal, striking as it does the worthy note of service, it should not drown out the fact that men need the Church more than it needs them. The vine lives even after many a branch is pruned, but the branch that is cut off withers.

We American Protestants have fallen into thinking of the Church as something which we support rather than as a mother church which supports us. Perhaps that is partly due to the fact that our national career has lacked tragic notes sufficient to stress our sense of divine dependence. Our founding fathers brought their churches with them, set up their meetinghouses alongside school buildings, and expanded the various denom-

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inations apace with growing national prosperity. Hence we have come to look upon our churches as social agencies, more or less useful; but we forget that the Church carried us before we carried the churches.

Regarding the churches as institutions which we support, we are prone to feel them as expensive burdens. Viewing them as social agencies of moral correction, we are often vexed by what seems their meddling trait. To us on a picnic the policeman's whistle seems an irritating intrusion; to us in a panic, the policeman's presence is most welcome. The American people have not gone through waters so deep that they reach up to the Church as the ark of salvation. "The Church is not an association of people who are interested in 'religion' or even in social betterment. It is primarily a company of people who have been apprehended by God in Christ, and who associate together in the spirit of common humility and service."¹

Only as we recover thought of the Church's divine rootage can we clarify the issues of conflicting authority between church and state. In America we have cherished the doctrine of separation of the two. But the soil which has sustained that principle is the fear of the church's domination of state. The specter which frightens the freedom-loving crowd is that some sect may get too much influence over the government.

Now looms on the horizon a new shadow, the totalitarian state. When we Americans see the subservience of the church to the state in other countries, we may comfort ourselves by saying, "It can't happen here." Yet each enlargement of governmental functions offers

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a new point at which political power can exert pressure on the church. The teachers' oaths, the efforts toward censoring the press, tend to open the way for the government to get to the church. If war tension should develop, the churches would undoubtedly again be commandeered. Weakness of corporate life within them encourages state domination.

This situation, fraught with peril, calls for a redefinition of boundaries between church and state. We must see that the state is not the society in its totality, but merely a structure built within society for political purposes, and hence co-ordinate with other groupings such as the church, labor unions, chambers of commerce. Or rather, the state is a co-ordinator of these other groups.

In a last speech which Stanley Baldwin delivered as prime minister of England he is reported as saying: "The old doctrine of the divine right of kings has gone, but we have no intention of erecting in its place a new doctrine of the divine right of states, for no state that ever was is worthy of a free man's worship. . . . The King is the symbol of the union, not only of an empire, but of a society which is held together by a common view of the fundamental nature of man. It is neither the worship of a tribe nor of a class. It is a faith, a value placed upon the individual, derived from the Christian religion. The Christian state proclaims human personality to be supreme; the servile state denies it." ²

It is possible that the crucial public question of the next decade will be the problem growing out of the determination by the Christian Church to redefine its relation to the state. That is what gives epochal impor-

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tance to the deliberations of the recent Oxford Conference on Church, State, and Community. We are witnessing the impending clash of two totalitarianisms—that of the state and that of the Christ. The unfolding of that drama will determine the destiny of the Western world.

The Church of Christ must speak as “one having authority.” As the body of Christ it is both supernatural and supernational. It is commissioned to use every resource that the states may not create the dilemma of loyalty to country or to Christ. Should such a dilemma develop, the Church must follow Christ.

7. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

NOT long ago each new pronouncement of science was tested by its conformity to the Bible. While in some areas religious authority is strong enough still to silence the voices of science, the tables have turned so that now Biblical interpretations must meet the scientist's test.

Some of the orthodox Old Guard would defend the scriptural ramparts to the last. They often use weapons of dialecticals outmoded, futile in shielding the faith of the beleaguered, especially of younger members. The Bible cannot be defended by blunderbusses when science is attacking it with latest Big Berthas.

This task at which traditionalists fail is not taken up by enlightened leaders qualified to interpret the authority of Holy Writ. Many a preacher, aware that the Bible is not popular among laymen, avoids it. To catch the public ear he draws on every best seller, fearing to stake his sermons on the Book of Books. Marked in modern preaching is its lack of scriptural wealth.

"I will send (saith the Lord God) a famine of hearing the words of Jehovah." Amos is as up-to-date as Norman Thomas. In many a parish earnest ministers flay their people with social and moral challenges, but do not feed their minds with sufficient, spiritual food to sustain their morale. In others pastors are so harassed to keep their churches going that they get few long per-

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spectives to see whither they go. In our worthy social passion to shake people out of their inert selfishness, we must remember that while we may check a fainting fit with a dash of cold water, we cannot cure a case of pernicious anemia by repeated dashes. We cannot fight social campaigns with empty minds nor shock people into salvation. Remember too the danger of a "famine of hearing the words of Jehovah" was pointed out, not by a pious seeker of safety zones, but by the pioneer social prophet.

A return to Biblical preaching is no retreat from imperative social programs, but an advance upon them with vitalizing power. This return might serve to generate an atmosphere in which preaching itself would draw a new breath of life. Commenting some time ago on the high reputation of the Scottish pulpit, Dr. John A. Hutton said Scotland had produced few preachers of first rank. The splendid quality of its preaching, however, is due to the fact that the people are steeped in Scripture. In such an atmosphere ordinary preaching takes on a glow.

Time is overdue for the development of a fresh type of expository preaching. Very probably the traditional type of pulpit exposition would prove too dry for modern American consumption. The congregation which from alluring diversions has been whisked to church in speeding cars will hardly sit patiently while the preacher plods his way through Hebrew derivations and Greek roots. If, however, he starts from the situations in which people find themselves, preaching, as Dr. Fosdick says, to objects rather than to subjects, and then leads

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them back to Bible sources for solutions, he will hold his hearers. He will help to recover recognition of the Bible's authority.

The Word as guidebook to godliness and to God can win the respect of the modern mind and is the Baedeker of our spirits. It shows where saints have trod and where they found what appeared to be the vision and the voice of God. That some experiences they report were colored by their personalities and times does not weaken, but enhances, their value, for when the reader follows far and thoughtfully enough he finds progress revealed in the reports. Leaving personal equations and backgrounds of the various writers, he begins to understand diversity of detail and disparity between accounts. These would be inexplicable on the old theory of infallible divine dictation. If every word of Scripture were thought of as dictated by God to sacred penmen preserved from error, how would the reader reconcile the cruel explosiveness of the imprecatory psalms with the tenderness of Isaiah's fifty-third chapter or Paul's fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians? How would he harmonize the cynicism of Ecclesiastes with the buoyant hopefulness of Revelation?

Such disparities, which shattered former faith in verbal inspiration, do not shake the trust of the modern student. Ingersoll's "mistakes of Moses," which disturbed our fathers, would not faze some of their sons who have become familiar with the purpose and progress of scriptural books. We are grateful that compilers of the canon did not try to harmonize the records. They honestly included inconsistencies, thereby leaving the

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rough trail by which we follow the Hebrew nation's climb toward the understanding of God.

In the Bible we see individual experiences supplemented and sewed together by racial progress. The Scriptures are not a collection of post-card photographs but a panoramic portrait, colored by human personalities, impressionistic in places. The sweep of the canvas and the diversity of portrayal add to its authority. It is the guidebook left by the noblest spiritual aristocracy ever on this planet.

To restore the Bible's authority we must show it to be more than a report of man's search for God. It is a record of God's revelation to men. At once that statement meets the challenge that what we call a revelation of God is only a projection of man's imagination, that "the sublimest prophetic conception of the character of God is but the art-product of human phantasy, created to meet the need of human souls in the stress of their labors and anguish, born of the Will-to-Believe."¹

Are men only reveling in their own wish-thinking when they fancy that God is revealing Himself to them? How much does the subjective element enter into what we call divine revelation? Man's ordinary life is under the control of reason, but now and then he has the feeling, if only for a moment, of being caught out of himself. Some truth is flashed in upon him which he did not reach by his own moral thinking. At such times the imagination is excited, so that ideas take on concrete forms or visions. Hence it is not surprising that in ancient times and even today the inward picture may be confounded with the objective reality. But when the insight

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causes the receiver "to rise above himself and to produce some form of creative expression that for successive generations lifts men to higher levels of truth, wisdom, and life than they could have otherwise attained, that may well be called 'inspiration.' There are many degrees of it and those instances of it which are worthy to be called 'revelations' are the creations that know no limits of date or regional space, but that continue age after age and in all lands to speak to men as though out of eternity." ²

Tested by this standard, the Bible is a record of "revelation." To say that is to assert the fact of divine aggression without taking away the human naturalness of the process. The receiver of the revelation employs his natural powers, the whole of himself; but his experience is a response and not a self-projection.

All learning implies a co-operative activity between the seeker and the object studied. The scientist in his study of nature is himself the product of the Nature which he is studying. Just as nature develops the minds capable of deciphering its secrets, so the Heavenly Father is working in and through the seeking mind of His child. Man's searching for God is the pull of an impulse implanted in him by God, and man's finding is a response to the divine desire to be discovered.

In the Bible, therefore, we see the process of "emergent evolution" in the spiritual realm. We hear Psalms whose haunting beauty and truth linger so timelessly on the air of the ages that we are sure their authors were "thinking God's thoughts after Him." We listen to prophets rising so high above the ideas of their neigh-

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bors that we explain their consciences only as calls from the eternal. We follow a people dug out of obscurity in the dim, misty morning of the patriarchs, heated in suffering of Egyptian bondage, tempered in forges of the Judges, welded into a nation by Saul and David, broken into bits by the sons of Solomon, scattered in the adversities of exile, but held together by a deathless hope. Watching all this, we cannot but feel that it is the drama of a truly "chosen people," for a call heard so long as this can hardly be the echo of their own voices. Then appears the Bible climaxed by evangelists convinced that they beheld "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

With its enduring insights and sustained sweep, the Bible "finds" us at the depths of our beings, as it found Coleridge. It speaks with an authority which we can call nothing less than the Word of God.

8. THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

WHEN in our search for certainty we follow back through the findings of the Church and up through the revelations of the Bible, we come to One whose work is for the Christian the event "toward which the whole creation moves." The touchstone by which the Church tests its authority of pronouncements is the Lordship of Christ. Other movements try to advance beyond their founders, but Christianity's slogan of advance has always been "Back to Christ." He who gave Christianity birth has been the flying goal of its development. He is the Alpha and Omega, "the author and finisher of our faith."

The ascription of such sovereign authority is an assumption which reason naturally challenges. How can men claim that a peasant-born carpenter's son in a provincial village at a primitive period can be authoritative in our complex world wherein almost every element of environment is different from that of Palestinian days? Further, how can it be reasonable to assert that a figure, however influential on our little planet, is the authoritative personality in our universe of myriad earths? How can we believe that Christ is the final authority, not to be superseded by future progress?

Is this sovereign Christ of faith a projection of man's wish-thinking, which has enlarged to the point of distortion the meager facts recorded of the historic Jesus?

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How can we be sure that we know exactly what Jesus did say and do? Was Jesus not the child of his time in that he shared the apocalyptic expectations of his day, and as such can he be the authority for the ages? Are his teachings an "impossible possibility" of an ideal perfection, or is he to be taken as an authoritative guide amid the realities of this present world? ¹

Thus queries multiply. To recover the authority of Jesus for the modern mind means the traveling of many roads. It is a task too inclusive for this brief discussion. We can only suggest certain points of emphasis in the procedure.

The Gospels record that Jesus "spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The posture of authority was integral to his very voice and bearing. The scribes carried the prestige of an ecclesiastical system; Jesus was ordained of himself. The scribes cited authorities and precedents; Jesus was his own authority and precedent. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you." He was one man against the gods of tradition.

The gospel portraits unite in presenting Christ's claim to a totalitarian authority. He demanded a sovereign loyalty: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." He accepted the ascription of Lordship: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." He staked his appeals for confidence in the unseen future on his personal authority: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. If it were not so, I would have told you." The Fourth Gospel is true to his spirit and claim when it interprets him as saying,

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"I am the way, the truth, and the life." His life was his message. His character carried its own sanctions.

Yet Christ did not rest his claims to authority on himself. He spoke with authority in the first person because he felt himself so identified with his Heavenly Father that his words were in divine unison. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He made men aware of God. He had so completely surrendered himself to God that he felt the divine spirit had been surrendered to him. It was the sense of mutual surrender which removed all spirit of strain from Jesus' claim to authority. He did not feel that he must demonstrate the proof of his right to command. God would eventually do that. Time and God were on his side. In asserting his rightness, Jesus spoke with the quiet calm of a scientist who knows that his work is in line with the laws of nature.

His was also the positive assurance of the artist. In the realm of values he, like Browning, realized that "we musicians know." Hence it was futile to attempt proof for those who came asking, "By what authority doest thou these things?" or to persons like Pilate who, when he was seeking mere expediency, queried, "What is truth?" Jesus could not demonstrate to sophisticated teachers such as Nicodemus secrets which can only be entered by a new birth, nor could he reveal to sideline spectators certainties which can be conveyed only to those who have been attuned by surrender and obedience. The power of Jesus is "hidden from the wise and prudent" and "revealed unto babes." When Jesus speaks,

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many still say "he is beside himself;" but "he that is of the truth heareth (his) voice."

To those who sincerely and earnestly sought the certainty of Jesus' divine authority, a way was open. It was the road of moral obedience. "If any man will do His (God's) will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself." The testimony of the ages is that those who follow that road, find their confidence in Christ growing the farther they go. Men may sometimes think that Jesus' way does not work while they are in the midst of it, but at the end of the earthly road his followers never feel that their Lord has let them down. When we are kind as Christ was kind to friend and foe alike, we find our feeling growing that this is a kindly and considerate universe which will not cruelly destroy us in death. When we are pure in heart as he was pure, we find our vision clearing and our sense of God's goodness growing more real.

In the social as in the personal realm, experience confirms the rightness of Jesus' principles. Society grows more complex, but through the maze of human relationships the truth shines clearer that Nazarene principles of fellowship are the only ones by which men can dwell together in lasting brotherhood. Though business forms its billion-dollar combinations, amid the vast intricacy of modern industry it becomes ever more apparent that the principles of service laid down by the Palestinian teacher must predominate if the world of finance is to be saved. While nations still prepare for war, war-makers admit that theirs is the way of death, and excuse

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it only as an expedient until nations together find a workable program of putting Christ's methods into practice.

"By what authority doest thou these things?" asked those who marveled at the Master's works of healing. What wonderment the centuries have added to that question. A peasant with no family prestige, a carpenter with no public office, a leader with no army during his lifetime save a dozen stragglers, one of whom was a deserter, a prisoner whose execution was probably not known to the Roman Emperor in whose name it was ordered, and no doubt quickly forgotten even by the subordinate who ordered it! Yet that lonely, broken figure has moved the world with greater impact than all armies that ever marched, all navies that ever sailed, and all parliaments that ever sat. The testimony to the divine authority of Jesus is that, despite all delays, the universe seems to be on his side.

When the seeker for certainty falls into a mood of doubt concerning the authority of Jesus, let him consider the alternatives. "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." To turn our backs on Jesus' way is to turn traitor to ourselves.

An experience during the Passion Play at Oberammergau made a deep, lasting impression on the writer. While Judas was pacing the stage, plotting in his mind the betrayal of his Master, a storm arose. The darkened, thunderous heavens, with their flashing shafts of lightning, seemed, to one spectator at least, a kind of cosmic accompaniment to the machinations of Judas' mind. It was, of course, only a coincidence and the implication merely imaginary. But it gave new insight into

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the words of Jesus: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." Who punished Judas? No outside court or agency was called in to condemn him. Judas punished himself. That is the significant thing about playing false to the person and principles of Jesus. Treason to him turns out to be treason to our own nature.

This is the truth which Francis Thompson discovered after trying the alternatives to the Jesus' way of life:

"From those strong Feet that followed, followed after,
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.' " 2

In recovering his authority, we can hardly believe that the Christ would wish his followers to go barking at the heels of men, begging their attention. He did not so do in his day. Calmly and commandingly "he spoke as one having authority." His laws are the laws of that "life which is life indeed." Take them or leave them. But those who leave them find the values of life leaving them.

Yet authoritative as the centuries have found him to be, what are nineteen hundred years in the life of the race? Can we say that the Christ of Nazareth has given us the final wisdom? May not the future outgrow him?

It must be admitted that his environmental modes of

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living did date Jesus. He was the child of his time. How out of date the physical adjustments of that Palestinian period are has been made vivid by President Shirley Jackson Case in striking words: "Were he as we know him in his historical career living in America today, we should not elect him president of the United States, or deposit our savings in a bank under his management, or employ him as architect for a city skyscraper, or ride in a taxicab with him at the wheel." The title of Master does not qualify him for such modern techniques.

However, while the tools of Jesus are outmoded when transferred from the Nazareth carpenter shop to a modern factory, while his words were carried in vehicles of contemporary vocabulary and thought forms, the significant fact is that he did not entangle his principles in the limitations of period or place. One feature which distinguishes Jesus from the founders of other historic faiths is that his laws of living are at home in every clime and age. Islam has a desert pattern which makes it difficult to fit into urban communities. The Hindu religions have hindrances in becoming acclimated to the Western activist type of living. Jesus of Nazareth has a universal appeal.

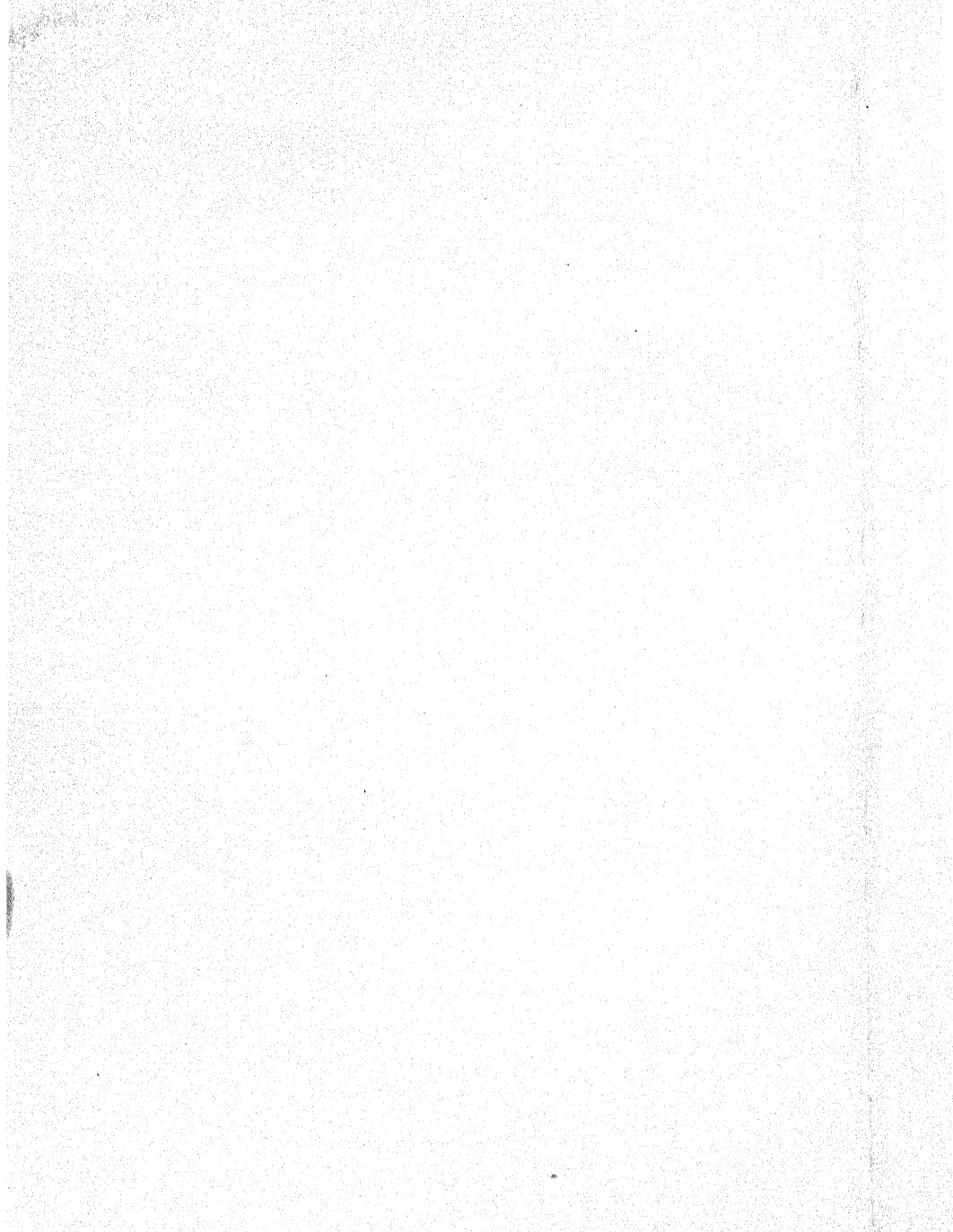
He is not limited by time or place because he talked in terms of directions rather than of definitions. We outgrow definitions. We do not outrun directions. On an Emmaus road nineteen centuries ago two disciples, who felt the accompanying presence of the Christ, reported of him that when they halted at their resting place, "he

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made as though he would go farther." That is the characteristic gesture of Jesus. With a leader who is always making "as though he would go farther," we have an authority that is with us "even unto the end of the ages."

II. THE RECOVERY OF BALANCE

9. The Golden Mean and the Good Life
10. The Balance between Christian Inheritance
and Investment
11. The Balance between "Souls" and Systems
12. The Balance between Comfort and Chal-
lenge
13. The Balance between Local Loyalty and
Large Outlook



II. THE RECOVERY OF BALANCE

9. THE GOLDEN MEAN AND THE GOOD LIFE

THE late "Dick" Sheppard, the dynamic preacher who did so much for the spiritual life of London, told in a recent book that he never bet on a horse race but once. That occasion was just after he had talked with a sulphuric old lady, who so ranted against the evils of gambling that in reaction he went at once to the race track and placed his bet. Doctor Sheppard went on to say that if we wish to win youth to Christian ideals we ought to recall the words which may be read on some English match boxes: "Rub lightly."

His point is well taken. Sometimes, in trying to improve people, when we "rub it in" too hard, we rub it out. We can so push our zeal in a good cause that we become fanatics or zealots and spoil our influence. Almost any virtue when carried to extremes verges toward a vice.

For balance is one of the essential elements which makes for mastery of living. For our personal situations and public problems we need persons who can keep their balance, who are not bowled over by sudden tackle of temptation or swept off their feet by gusts of novelty and surprise; balanced persons who can see both sides of

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a question sufficiently to do justice to each and yet not straddle the issues, thereby doing good to neither; who can laugh at themselves without becoming laughable and be serious without being somber; who can drive head and heart together, not allowing emotions to run away with them nor reason to make them stand still; who can play without becoming victims of their pleasures and work hard without becoming slaves to their jobs.

This element of balance, which the ancient Greeks stressed in their doctrine of the Golden Mean, has a special appeal in our unstable time. In a day when cases of emotional instability multiply and men are staggering between extremes of liberty and repression, we have need of that sure sense of proportion which was shown in the graceful lines of Greek art and living.

The principle of balance in Jesus' way of living merits study. The Master lived above the temptations of the flesh, yet he was no ascetic. He loved the quiet hours of solitude, yet he was no recluse. His was a master mind delighting in dialectic, yet loving the simplicity of little children. He was so indifferent to money that his biographers do not even mention the matter of his possessions, yet he never appeared poverty-stricken; and he gave such an impression of abundant living that rich young men came to learn his secret. He was a man of sorrows, but he carried no downcast air of depression. His methods seemed on the surface so much more conservative than the Baptist's that John's followers began to doubt him, yet his solutions were so much more radical that they make John's seem superficial.

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It was Jesus' perfect balance which preserved him from that narrowness so common to leaders of great causes. He was bent on a world mission and he knew that his time was short, but Jesus did not dash about with single-tracked intensity. He took time to behold the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, to play with little children in whom he found his Kingdom patterns, to talk and dine with sinners, making them feel he was there for them alone. The earthly career of Jesus resembled no millrace rushing between narrow banks in its mission of generating power. Rather, it was like a broad stream, drawing its waters from many tributaries, leaping ahead at times with the speed of rapids and at others flowing gently beside green pastures.

The broad balance of his life delivered Jesus from that departmentalizing due to professionalism. He was a teacher above all others, and yet he never developed the earmarks of a pedagogue. He was a preacher without equal, but we would not think of calling him a pulpiteer, and it would seem irreverent to refer to him as Rabbi Jesus or The Reverend Jesus. He wrought reforms the most revolutionary on record, and yet it would convey a most inadequate and unworthy impression to call him a reformer as we know that term. There is no one word sufficiently broad and roomy to embrace the personality of Jesus. He was the Son of Man, but even that expression has been narrowed by its background of use.

Yet, with all its balance, Jesus' way of life hardly fits the Greek ideal of "nothing in excess." The Stoic principle of the Golden Mean was to secure balance by

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holding back from extremes. There was about it a calculating self-protectiveness foreign to Jesus. The attitude that one should not love his wife or child too much, lest he be wounded too deeply by their loss—that was a defense mechanism not advocated by the Nazarene teacher of vicarious love. The Greek *μηδὲν ἄγαν* found little sympathy in the Master's teaching.

The mental posture of Jesus was not the proportioned grace of a Greek statue, but rather the grace of the wind which "bloweth where it listeth." That symbol which he used in his discussion with Nicodemus is descriptive of the Christlike spiritual grace which moves freely toward vacuums, thus restoring the balance of nature and human nature. Christian balance is preserved by action, not by restraint. The abundant life which Christ came to give is not marked by cold statuesqueness, but by racing vitality.

Hence, when we call for the recovery of balance, let us be clear that we get the Christlike concept. It does not mean that cautious steadiness, which so often comes with physical avoirdupois and mental middle-age and is frequently called "being practical." It does not mean that moral smoothness acquired by compromise and camouflaged as tact. The Christian achieves balance not by timidly warning against "rocking the boat," but by filling the sails which give the steady grace of speed. He does not stay in the middle of the road until he makes his moderation a mental rut, but broadens his course so that he can profit by the views on both sides. The Christ who went to the cross for his convictions can hardly be called a middle-of-the-road moderate.

10. THE BALANCE BETWEEN CHRISTIAN INHERITANCE AND INVESTMENT

THERE are words whose very sound makes life seem larger. Their echoes, as they roll through the chambers of the mind, give a sense of spaciousness. One such set of phrases is that given by Paul to describe the members of the Christian enterprise: "Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." These words suggest both a past tense of inheritance and a present tense of investment. It is the balance between the two which we need to recover.

While every thoughtful person realizes that his life is largely a heritage, there are two ways of viewing one's inheritance. One may reason thus: "Yes, I have a good home, but I have it because my parents desired pleasant surroundings and I have simply entered into their possession through the act of physical birth." Or he may say, "To be sure, I have a bountiful land in which to live, but I have it because the early American pioneers were a thrifty people and desired the comforts of life for themselves, and I had the good fortune to fall heir to them." In short, he may look upon his inheritance as possessed through the mere fact of physical evolution. Such a view stirs little sense of gratitude.

The fine nature feels differently, however. He recognizes that even in so personal a matter as his health he is indebted to sacrificial parental care which laid the foundation of his physical constitution, and to con-

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scientious medical servants who developed the curative agencies at his disposal. He is grateful for mechanical conveniences which many modern men take for granted, for he visions the dreamers who have worked and died between the day when Roger Bacon wrote of aeroplanes and the time when Orville Wright began to build them. The high-minded man sees the red of sacrifice running through the whole social fabric as scarlet thread runs through the strands of the British navy. He sees himself as an heir of the surplus service of his ancestors, of that which they did more than they had to do. He regards his inheritance as having come to him not by the mere accident of physical evolution but by conscious choice of others.

It is this latter sense of gratitude which Paul is seeking to instill in his fellow churchmen. He is telling them that they are the "heirs of God," by adoption and not by mere act of birth. The adopted child, if he stops to think, has a more vivid feeling of gratitude than the natural child because he knows that his sonship is the result of conscious selection. So Christians should be aware of the willed choices made in their behalf. They are heirs of the godliness of their ancestors. They are "heirs of God."

Moreover, as protégés of a Christian civilization, we should see ourselves heirs of Christ. We look back to what life was before He came. We think of the freshening impulses which He started in human society. We think of the unrelieved poverty, the dark hopelessness of that pre-Christian era. We think—ah, but do we think? We have been so long on this journey toward

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Christ's kingdom of heaven and the progress has been so slow that we often cease to be mindful of the blessings brought to us by this journey of Christianity through the world. When a family is on a long automobile trip, when the road is dusty and disagreeable, and assistant chauffeurs in the rear seat are a bit voluble with their suggestions, it is sometimes well just to stop the car and ask whether they wish to go back. So in our journey toward the Kingdom, it might startle us awake to ask what would happen if we all went back to the conditions before Christ came. If our imaginations would glimpse that retrospect as a prospect, we should see that without Christ we would be without the philanthropy which is behind our colleges, without the civic spirit which sustains our public schools, without the idealism which undergirds our fraternal orders, without the security which stabilizes our law and order. Yes, indeed we are the heirs of Christ.

No person can enter into the amplitude of a Christian experience unless he thinks of this vast inheritance of the ages. There is a certain shortsightedness, if not silliness, in the popular mood which sneers at the Church while it pretends to exalt the Christ. Our generation would not even know of Jesus had it not been for the Church, which it is the vogue to condemn. It was the Church which preserved the precious documents of the Gospels, and translated them in bare, monastic cells. It was the Church which sent its emissaries up into the wilds of western Europe and across the stormy Atlantic to the rock-bound shores of a strange new world. It was the Church which impelled those circuit-riding

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preachers to shuttle in and out of the frontier communities weaving the silken strands of Christian culture into the coarse fabric of pioneer life. The vast majority of Christ's gifts have come to us secondhand, and it is when we see the secondhandedness of them that we sense the sweep and richness of the Christian enterprise. A recent funeral service gave a good demonstration of this enlarging effect of glancing backward at our Christian inheritance. It was in a little undertaker's chapel on Broadway. The low ceiling, the heavily scented air, the noises of the streets, all combined to give a sense of oppressive imprisoning closeness. The man being mourned had been an executive in two of our most modern lines of business, the motion picture and the radio. The mourners represented the same industries. The whole setting was instinct with modernity. Then began the words of the twenty-third Psalm. One could feel the horizons lifting as those twentieth-century harassed New York minds were led "beside the still waters" and the hills of Palestine came into view. One could feel the room expanding still farther as the minister's voice drew from the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel the picture of "my Father's house" of "many mansions." Here was a company catching again the consciousness that they were "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

This enlarging sense of background is as essential in religion as elsewhere. University curricula are built on the principle of first studying the history of a field before seeking to advance its frontiers. American architecture, for example, prides itself on its distinctive and

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creative features; nevertheless our architectural schools still study the classic models and continue to send their prize pupils to Rome and other seats of the ancient art. A stabilizing past tense preserves a person from crude eccentricities and brash newness.

The scantiness of religious knowledge is responsible for so many people's running off on tangents of new cults, and also for the wrecks of faith attributed to science and other causes. The college freshmen whose only teaching in prayer is to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep," is likely to wake up, a sophomore skeptic. Then the college is blamed by his parents, or his new learning is credited by himself for this change, which in reality is due to neither.

Not long ago two lads in Kansas were out hunting Indian arrowheads. So engrossed were they in their pursuit that they did not notice a black cloud gathering on the horizon. Before they were aware of it, they were engulfed by a dust storm so dense that they could scarcely see each other. Holding together, they groped their way till coming to a fence which ran along a road. Thus they found their way back home. There are times when the roads and fences of our fathers demonstrate their value, and the mania for modernity which forgets that fact is heading for disaster.

Yet this regard for our religious inheritance must not lessen our recognition of it as an investment. We are more than "heirs of God." We are "joint heirs with Christ." That puts a present tense into religious experience which one's ordinary language does not always possess. It is one thing to recognize our heirship

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of God in Christ through belief in a past gift; it is quite another to feel a comradeship with Him through participation in His present creative activity. Some people feel toward God as a boy feels toward a father who died before his birth. The lad sees the picture of his parent, he hears of his noble deeds, he reveres his name, but he has had no fellowship with his father. Similarly many a churchman is a spiritual orphan. To him God is a Creator, a First Cause; to him Jesus is a majestic personality who once lived in Palestine and whose works have come down through institutions of the race. But he feels himself no "joint heir with Christ" in any present partnership.

It is vain to try to keep men's spirits warm with custom-made forms of worship and ecclesiastically tailored creeds. It is futile to rely on church machinery to turn out religious products which can come only through the handwork of personal experience. We truly inherit nothing except what we also discern and appropriate by appreciation. Mere acceptance of the conclusions of others is no way by which to profit from the "labors of the saints." We must recover the first-hand apostolic association with God in Christ. In Raphael's picture, "The School at Athens," a group of students is gathered around the teacher following the explanation of a design on the floor. The first pupil shows he understands, a second failing this is looking over his shoulder at the third to see whether he gives signs of comprehension. Which are we? Understanding pupils of the Divine Teacher who can follow His demonstration, or hearers of the word only who look around to see if

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others are divining the truth of Christ any better than we? Is our Christian faith merely a belief in what was done for us nineteen hundred years ago, or is it also a belief in what is being done with us now?

Religion to be vital must be both an inheritance and an investment. And let us be realistic about this matter of investing with Christ.

Looking back from our vantage point of observation we say that Peter and his fellow disciples made a good investment when they threw in their lot with Jesus. Had they allowed that opportunity to pass, they would have lived and died, "unwept, unhonored, and unsung." Think of John, in whose name a cathedral is being erected in the city of New York costing more than all Galilee was worth in his day. Think of the publican who gave up his little, paltry, despised post of tax collector to become Matthew and have a glorious Gospel named after him. Looked at in this light from our day, the disciples' investments turned out well, as even Wall Street would agree.

We admit also that putting our money in Christian enterprises pays well today. Jesus was a healer, and we recognize hospitals as among our most worthy philanthropies. Jesus was a teacher, and colleges command endowments from our wealthiest and wisest capitalists. Jesus was a Saviour of men through the power of the Spirit, and the Church which essays to carry on that work receives our millions in support. Even business calculators like Babson and Barton acknowledge the advisability of investing in these concerns which have proved their worth.

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Still all this is far from the investing spirit of the original disciples and of Jesus. We give to established causes because they have proved themselves. The disciples went in with Jesus when they did not know how he was coming out. That is a difference which illustrates the contrast in vitality between apostolic and conventional Christianity. Church members listen to the preaching of Christ as to the presentation of a familiar Shakespearean play. We already know the plot. We always know where we are coming out. About the only interest we gain, therefore, from hearing a new preacher is to see whether he plays his part with more finesse or better technique than other players we have heard.

Suppose, however, we were to say, "We are going to follow Jesus in our church life as precisely as possible, however it comes out"—what would happen? It would mean measuring our conduct by standards deeper than mere decency and doing some things more than respectability demands. It would mean—well, we do not know just what it would mean. That is the point. Our Christian profession would become an adventure. We would discover Christ anew for ourselves.

Suppose that we were to set out to follow Jesus in our social and business circles, cost what it may. What would happen? It would mean that society and business would be no longer mere circles of routine in which we compete for the same rewards, buy the same cars, vie with our neighbors in keeping up with the crowd. It would mean—well, we do not know. We cannot tell how it would come out, but thereby we would be recapturing Christianity's original spirit of investment and also its

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apostolic adventure and thrill. We would become "joint heirs with Christ" in a going concern.

One of the subtlest secrets of successful Christian living is that of learning how to capitalize the past without losing the willingness to invest in the future. It is the secret of continuously enriching age. When does a person pass his prime? Physically, perhaps, in the late forties or early fifties. Mentally, he probably reaches his productive peak some ten years later. When, however, does a Christian character pass his prime? Never. The experiences of the past become the producing capital for larger interest, making rich the "last of life for which the first was made."

Some years ago a New York family, consisting of a father and mother and their seven-year-old son, stopped at Colorado Springs to take the exciting drive up Pike's Peak. The driver seemed to take delight in running as closely as possible to the edge of the cliff from which the passengers could look down for two thousand feet of sheer drop. Finally the mother grew too frightened to look longer and put her head in her husband's lap, only to find that of little comfort because his knees were trembling. Thus father and mother were having dire trouble, but the seven-year-old son was having the time of his life, for the closer the car came to the edge of the cliff, the farther over he would lean to look. The lad was thinking less about the Bible at that moment than his parents were, but nevertheless he was illustrating a passage in that Book. In the last chapter of Ecclesiastes it

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says of those who are getting old, "They shall be afraid of that which is high."

This fear of the high is one of the failures of age. It is evidence that the weight of inheritance has weakened the willingness to invest. It is a weakness avoided by those who are "joint heirs with Christ."

11. THE BALANCE BETWEEN "SOULS" AND SYSTEMS

IT is said that Robert Browning had a peculiar defect in his physical vision. One eye was far-sighted and the other near-sighted. Hence, when Browning wished to see a distant scene, he closed his near-sighted eye; and when he desired to study a close-up view, he shut his far-visioned eye. Thus, in the whimsical words of Halford Luccock, the poet was enabled to "see the long and the short of it."

However it may have been regarding Browning's eyesight, it is some such bifocal vision which we need today in surveying our social and religious situation. To keep our balance, we must see the close-up view of the individual and the long-range view of the systems in which they are caught.

It was this ability to see both the individual person and the large principle which made Lincoln much more understanding than many an adviser. When Lincoln sat with neighbors behind the stove in the village store at Springfield, he kept the broad view of slavery's peril and the nation's unity. Then later, when he sat behind his desk in the White House directing a continental war, he could feel how that war, hateful to himself, touched the boys back in Springfield or down in Atlanta. To keep company with great issues without losing the common touch is the secret of successful leadership.

It is this twofold vision which Jesus had in supreme

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degree. He came to save a world and establish the Kingdom of God, but he talked not in big vague terms, such as "society" or "humanity," nor did he use the abstract impersonal generalizations of "poverty" or "injustice." He did talk of lost boys and widow's mites, of an unjust steward and a poor beggar. His imagination was so sensitive to individuals caught in social systems of Palestine that he felt himself standing in the shoes of the poor, the imprisoned, the sick. His self-identification with society's victims was so complete that he could say, "Whosoever hath done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, hath done it unto me."

We who call ourselves the followers of Jesus must endeavor to see the faces behind the figures of unemployment, of crime statistics, of war's casualties. We must try to put ourselves so vividly in the place of the person out of work that we can feel the ache in his soul and the drag in his steps as he climbs the stairs after his fruitless search and shakes his head in the face of his hoping wife and children. When we talk about "the joy of the job," we must try to understand the monotony of the factory worker who stands day after day pulling a lever or hammering bolts into car bodies on a moving platform before him. When we denounce the injustices of the industrial system, we must think of those individual conscientious employers who are themselves caught in a competitive system wherein chisellers undermine fair practices, and in the clutches of a capitalistic order with its conflict of loyalties to employees, to stockholders, and to that great third party, the public.

This Christlike imagination is the first requisite of

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social redemption. It might seem that its growth would be guaranteed by our improved means of communication and travel. It is now much easier to see and hear "how the other half lives." Yet this possible improvement is hindered by the increasing departmentalization and specialization of life. We are tattooed in our cradles with the beliefs of our tribe, and then travel and education often serve merely to provide respectable garb which covers but preserves these prejudices. Even on the college campus this narrowing of interest is plain, so that any activity or cause can be expected to interest only a small fraction of the students, and motion picture personalities are almost the sole object of general campus knowledge.

With this modern narrowness of specialization goes the old proneness to generalize on insufficient data. An American business man pays his wife's millinery bill in Paris and comes home asserting that the French are a nation of greedy shopkeepers. A round-the-world tourist, spending a stopover in Shanghai, talks with a hotel bellhop and returns declaring that foreign missions are a complete failure.

Thus our modernized travel, our multiplied reading matter, and our radio communications result in bringing races and classes closer together physically and often farther apart spiritually and socially. The closer we live together, the more conscious we become of our differences. The crowded cities turn into centers of sharpest industrial tensions. Harlem brings the Negroes into the neighborhood of the whites, but instead of becoming a laboratory for working out new ways of

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neighborliness between the races, it heightens the barriers of color.

The change in our social landscape is well symbolized by the skyline of Manhattan Island. The pictures of New York seventy years ago show a low-lying level ridge of buildings some four or five stories high, the very evenness of that skyline suggesting the comparative economic equality existing in that little city, where employers walked and rode side by side with their employees. Behold the Manhattan contour of today. Great pyramids of stone rise to the height of a hundred stories, but alongside the skyscrapers are yawning canyons, caused by the low buildings and areas necessary to furnish light and air. Similarly in our social skyline, individuals rise to a financial height which would have dizzied our grandfathers; but alongside are the chasms of inequality.

Whence are to come the sensitized imagination and social understanding which can bridge these social chasms as the machine age has conquered the geographical spaces? From the school? Here we see the increasing separation into public and private schools. From business and trade associations? Here, too, men gather round kinship of economic interest. Men's luncheon clubs are aloof from the groups of organized labor. It is to religion that we must turn for that rising tide of sympathetic acquaintance which, overflowing, will obliterate racial and economic barriers.

The vision and voice of the churches, alas, often but widen the misunderstandings between social groups. The church on the avenue is disposed to see the danger

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of reds everywhere, while the church in the mining district is inclined to see everything "red." Thus the Church of Christ, which ought to teach both sides to beware of covetousness, plays the role which its Founder refused and becomes "a judge and divider," thereby subtly sharpening the sense of separation. One of the most sinister aspects of our social situation is the tendency toward class churches. Earnest young theological students see this peril and prepare to counteract it with their social gospel; but cautious pulpit committees guard the portals of their comfortable sheepfolds so that these dangerous ecclesiastical wolves seldom get into sheep's clothing and mingle with the flock.

Some time ago the writer had occasion to fly over New York City on a clear sunny afternoon. Manhattan Island, beheld in perspective, lay like a great ship anchored at the mouth of the Hudson. The serried towers of buildings stretched symmetrically row on row; the lanes of traffic looked like black threads sewing the city together; the giant liners at their wharves appeared as messengers eager to be off—the sight was one to stir a thrill of pride in the noble city and in the genius of man which could create it. But a few weeks later the same observer raised his study window atop an apartment house at the midnight hour and listened to the medley of metropolitan sounds, deep undertones of mechanical traffic, occasional overtones of human voices, screeching of brakes, whistles of watchmen. With a little imagination his mind went behind those sounds to ponder the struggles, the frustrations, the shadows of crime, the maladjustments, the misery, which swirl

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and surge through a city. From that midnight mid-town window it was not hard to understand why Jesus "beheld the city and wept over it."

With a Christlike imagination which can visualize amid the vastness, we can see how much more progress our civilization has made in mechanical engineering than in its social planning and human adjustments. If the Church is not competent to prescribe formulas for curing the economic and political systems, it at least can cry out whenever and wherever it sees those systems endangering human values.

When we get this bifocal view of both individuals and systems, we see the futility of those who say that we must "save the souls" before we set out to save the systems; and that if we do the former, the latter will take care of themselves. Well-meaning as such words may be, they are not true. All too often they are not even well meant. They constitute the conventional cry of those who do not want the *status quo* disturbed. We must frankly admit that individual evangelism has frequently served as a safety valve against social explosiveness. Dr. Fosdick reports that one hard-boiled man of means expressed the feeling of many supporters of Christian missions when he said, "Keep 'em religious in order to keep 'em quiet."

Furthermore, even if we brought all individuals in a given group to the sawdust trail, that would be no guarantee that they would enter the Kingdom of Heaven. If every householder in a city were to dig a well in his own yard, that would not provide a water supply adequate for putting out fires or for cleaning streets. What

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is more, individual wells cannot preserve the purity of their own water amid the crowded conditions of city living. Individual Christians have shown themselves tragically blind and helpless in applying their morality to immoral society. Devout Christians, judged by conversion standards, have proven worse than useless in stopping the conflagration of murder called war, for each goes into battle killing his fellow Christian while they both pray to the same God. Moreover, individual Christians, like wells, cannot keep themselves pure merely by safeguarding their own purity. According to the gospel picture of the Last Judgment, the only safely good people are those who are giving themselves to making life good for others.

In recovering the balance between "souls" and systems, we must, therefore, see that individuals can be saved only in and through systems. "*The crisis which our Protestant Christianity is facing today arises, as I see it, out of the fact that Christianity is shifting its center of gravity from the inner life to the social community.*"¹ This implies more than the preaching of the social gospel, as we have come to use that expression. It means the socialization of the individual gospel. "Souls" cannot be saved in social vacuums. A saved person is one who has a saving purpose. There is no true spirituality, according to Jesus, which is not socially inclusive. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and *then come and offer thy gift.*"

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Consider the continued impiety of saving individuals in revival meetings and then sending them out to be crucified in their ideals by the compromises of a competitive business system. How long can Sunday schools bring lads up to confirmation in church doctrines, and then send them out to be butchered by the brutalities of a war system? Whitehead puts the present predicament in strong terms when he says, "As society is now constituted, a literal adherence to the moral precepts scattered throughout the gospels would mean sudden death."² Are we to continue a situation in which genuine spiritual conversion would mean physical suicide and in which *adjustment* to society means soul suicide?

We must recover the apostolic treatment of individuals as members of the body. Why go on cleansing the hand if gangrene is working up from the foot? We are members one of another, and to be content with rescuing individuals from a dying world is about as scripturally consistent as is the effort to save the hand of a dying person. May it be that this truth is to be recovered in western Christendom through the insights of our younger oriental Christians? Listen to Kagawa: "In the nineteenth century individualism was rampant, and people thought that if they themselves were saved that was enough to work for as the goal of religion. We of the twentieth century, however, have begun to sense that the individual must enter into social solidarity. Individualistic Anglo-Saxons do not fully understand this. In the Orient, where the family feeling still exists, it is easier to grasp this fundamental con-

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cept. Probably one reason why our Western friends do not understand redemption at the present moment is because of this lack of a full sense of human solidarity." ³

On the other hand, if we are to recover balance, we must recognize that systems can be saved only in and through individuals. It is futile to think that we can set up a Utopia by merely changing political and economic systems. Good laws and equitable social planning do not guarantee the good life any more surely than good roads and improved motors insure safe travel. Reckless and drunken drivers can render the best roads dangerous; and mean, selfish men can spoil any social program, however good.

And while bad men can make good systems bad, good systems in themselves cannot make bad men good. While it is hard to overestimate the formative influence of environment upon character, nevertheless when any individual essays to offer his environmental situation as the complete alibi for his misconduct, he reveals himself as one in whom there is not much promise of improvement. At some point and to some degree, the individual must recognize his personal responsibility for channeling and controlling the forces which play upon him. There is no social substitute for individual responsibility and to lose that is to deaden the nerve of the redemptive process.

Since it is often easier to be a censor of public morals than to be a custodian of private virtue, the former role frequently is played to the neglect of the latter. For instance, a man lives loosely in his private sexual

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relationships, and then of his wealth he gives to the support of some welfare home which seeks to salvage the wrecks of womanhood. Such a gift is a social ameliorative; but let no man think that he can pay his personal debts of purity in such coin. Vice crusades, theater censorship, social reforms are all vital elements of contemporary living; but interest in reforming others must not become a drug which dulls the conscience to the need of personal redemption.

Nor can charity be palmed off on God in place of personal justice. When Zacchaeus sat across the table from Jesus that day in Jericho, he was moved to liberality. "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." But suppose the publican had said only that. It would not have satisfied the Master. Zacchaeus had to go further than mere philanthropy. "The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold." It was only when Zacchaeus had fulfilled the duty of being just as well as generous that Jesus said, "Today is salvation come to this house." Let us not deceive ourselves. God is no mathematician who puts our gifts as a numerator above the line and our dishonest deeds as a denominator below the line and then cancels. There is no cancellation in the moral realm. That is a fundamental doctrine of Protestant faith.

The past emphasis on the social gospel has given some ground for the evangelist's charge that it tends to silence the note of individual redemption. Perhaps L. P. Jacks puts it a bit strongly, but none the less truly, when he says, "This mass contrivance for getting duty

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done, while the individual is left free to serve the devil at his pleasure, is the summary sham of modern times." It misleads the individual into thinking that by his social activity he is thereby saving himself, and it deludes us into believing that public reforms promoted by persons unsettled in private life will save society. In *Twilight Sleep* Edith Wharton deftly describes the woman of wide social interests who could not manage her own life or household. Having no personal fulcrum for the lever of her social interest, her activity was upsetting rather than uplifting.

In contrast with this social substitution for personal duty, there looms out of the writer's boyhood the figure of an elderly farmer. He had been a pioneer in the community and he possessed the virtues and the vices of the pioneer. Having made his way against the rough elemental forces of an early day, he saw no reason why others should not make their way if they had the stamina. He neither wished to interfere with others, nor would he allow them to interfere with him. He did not talk to other people about their duties, nor would he tolerate others talking to him about his. He was typical of that self-reliant manhood which formed the vanguard of earlier American development. While such an individualist lacks the social insight and sympathy necessary in our day, he is a rather refreshing figure in contrast to the vicious circle wherein modern society often seems to move. His independence was a salutary corrective to some of our weakening interdependence. The failure of many people to mind their own business makes it necessary for modern communi-

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ties to spend an endlessly increasing amount of energy and money minding their business for them.

Somewhere between the stoical individualist on the one hand and the weak-spined products of social coddling on the other, the line of recovered balance must run. We must be *socially minded* to the degree of fulfilling Christ's law, "Bear ye one another's burdens"; and sufficiently stoical to fulfill that other equally fundamental Christian concept, "Every man must bear his own burden."

Saved individuals not only safeguard social reforms by preserving them from spoliation; but the individual is also the spearhead of social advance. The openings of social progress are made somewhat after the fashion of that Swiss hero who dashed out in front of his compatriots against the enemy phalanx, thereupon becoming the target of a shower of spears. Those weapons gathered into his own body left the way open for his line to leap forward. Thus a Jane Addams breaks the barriers for peace cohorts, and a Walter Rauschenbusch and a Josiah Strong open avenues for the social gospel. Hence it happens that a generation after the prophets have been stoned by the crowd, the stones are used for the road on which the crowd catches up to the place where the seers stood. But the puttylike crowd would never push its way through the wilderness of barriers were it not for those individual spear-points, who advance beyond the paved road of respectable morality to "go the second mile."

The recovery of balance between "souls" and systems means, then, individualization of the social gospel as

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well as socialization of the individual gospel. To individualize the social gospel requires revivifying not only the sense of personal responsibility, but also the feeling of personal potency. If one is to be effective in saving systems, one must overcome that helpless feeling which paralyzes him when he confronts huge tasks involved in social change. After a great social challenge has been presented to a group, how often a person shrugs his shoulders with a gesture of futility and says, "But what can I do about it?"

We face, for instance, an issue like the reduction of armaments. A mother said recently to a peace advocate, "My young people want to stop this munitions' evil, but they are not even voters. They have not so much weight with the politicians as we have, and that is very little. They feel, therefore, that they cannot do anything about it."

Or we look at the looseness of social standards around us. Bad? Yes. Vice among us? Yes. Old moral stabilities giving way? Yes. But what can I do about it? My little efforts to steady moral standards would be as futile as trying to check a western dust storm by blowing my breath against it. My influence is too small to count.

This dwarfing of the individual's feeling of effectiveness increases with the growth of numbers in the group. "If you don't, who will?" was an effective slogan a few years ago in raising the community chest fund in an Ohio town of fifteen thousand people, but it would have little force in New York City's six million. The

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individual and his spiritual force must be rescued from the dwarfing pressure of numbers.

Here enters the element which unites the individual and the social gospel. It is Jesus' principle of the leaven. Common is the case where in a family one Christlike individual leavens the attitude of the whole household. "The Servant in the House" has been enacted in many a home as well as on the stage. Similarly a half-dozen leaders can, by concerted effort, set the moral styles of a good-sized city. The crowded interdependence of modern life constitutes an improved medium for the spread of leavening influence. Never was moral atmosphere so subtly penetrating as it is today. We realize afresh that we are workers together with the God of leaven. Because of that fact we can set no limits to our individual responsibility or resources. By that fact is blended the saving of "souls" and of systems.

12. THE BALANCE BETWEEN COMFORT AND CHALLENGE

"THE leaders of popular religion have bent religion to serve men's needs and desires. Rarely have they taken a realistic look at the religious demands of the universe, and then, turning to man, said, 'Measure up!' . . . Consolation, rather than adjustment or devotion, has been the primary motive back of them." ¹

While the accuracy of Professor Meland's diagnosis depends on how much time and territory are taken into it, it is true that the emphasis of religion has staggered back and forth between comfort and challenge down history's road. Periods of courageous expansion have alternated with periods of spiritual retrenchment. Times of daring social advance have given way to mystical retreat.

It is natural that ours should be a day desirous of solace and security. We are a generation afflicted with the general ills to which flesh is heir, and then we also bear the scars of a recent war and a still more recent business panic. Like Elijah, we have seen pass before us the earthquake, the fire, and the tempest, and we do not seem to find God in these; and hence, like the prophet, we now listen to the still small voice. Living amid sharp tensions of industrial strife, seeing the excesses of extremists, hearing the noisiness of fanatics, we are now rather disposed to seek in religion that

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power which can hide us in the secret of the divine pavilion from the strife of tongues.

There is thus a current swing of the pendulum in religious circles toward the aspects of comfort, shelter, and security. The cults outside the evangelical churches capitalize these elements and grow. Preachers who specialize in personal psychological sermons get a better numerical hearing than do the social prophets. Books on how to make friends or how to live alone and like it are best sellers. Nice little treatises on inner poise make handsome profits while volumes on world peace are a drug on the market.

It is shortsighted to ignore the significance of this trend, though we may see its selfish elements. It behooves the religious forces to study the legitimate phases in this current consolatory mood.

The desire for comfort and encouragement is normal and not necessarily self-centered. The strongest natures need "building up" after times of depletion. In Gethsemane even the Master of Life cried out for comforting comradeship, both human and divine. One essential function of religion is to reveal to souls in their Gethsemanes, when darkness descends and friends fall asleep, that there is One watching over Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps, that beyond the gate where human companionship halts, a divine comradeship continues.

The Church must remember that it is the custodian of life's crises. It must minister to those moods when men are moved with thoughts too deep for words. It must heal the gash beyond the reach of secular surgery.

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With heartbreaking in his home, a doctor does not find the help which he needs in his crowd at the golf course, nor in his colleagues at the clinic. It is then that the "cure of souls" should be at hand. When "deep calleth unto deep," religion ought to give "the voice without reply." The pastor who can steady a sorrowing husband through the valley of the shadow of death can often lead him up to new heights of a social Christian viewpoint.

Some time ago a minister running afoul of his congregation was asked to resign. The press report was that he was too liberal in his social views for his conservative congregation. Probably he was, and all honor to him for it. In a newspaper interview, however, one of his parish officials was quoted as saying that their objection was not so much to what the preacher said as to what he did not say. It is not difficult to read between those lines and visualize a preacher who had become so fired with social passion that he had ceased to bring any cooling messages of personal comfort. Probably the criticism of his early social emphasis gave him a martyr complex which served to intensify his determination to hammer home his criticism. Feeling the nails of martyrdom beginning to pierce his own hands, he, unlike his Lord, lost the tenderness of touch essential to a balanced ministry.

Longing for shelter and calm is as legitimate as desire for comfort. The hectic rush of living makes rest periods more and more imperative. Living increasingly in crowds, we need the privacies of solitude. In urban life it is almost as if we lived in the exposure

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of barracks, and our spirits naturally crave the secret places of the Most High. With all the contemporary love of publicity, after a while the Great White Ways, the glaring limelight, the gazing spectators pall on us, and we desire the dim shadows of quiet retreats. We cannot live constantly under strain without becoming strained and thereby losing the clarity of our vision and the sureness of our touch. It was not constitutional cowardice but a natural reaction of normal courage which caused Jeremiah to cry, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them!" The hardest mariner at times longs for the harbor.

This longing for respite and calm is responsible for the popular appeal manifested by those religious cults which stress "going into the silence." It is not surprising that crowds flock from the sidewalks of New York to the air-conditioned ballrooms of hotels to hear soothing voices talk about mental poise and the "peace of God which passeth all understanding." In a world whose external conditions seem so difficult to change, men can turn with comparative ease to the Miltonic alternative of altering the mental outlook.

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

While this change of mind can be a devil's soliloquy to compensate us for our lost paradise and may also become a substitute for the social effort whereby paradise is to be regained, nevertheless it can be made a

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means of keeping our sanity and poise during the processes of social change.

Our minds need their places of retreat in order to see more clearly their programs of advance. The Master himself went into the wilderness quietude before starting out to save a world.

We can scarcely deny that desire for security, like that for comfort and calm, is a legitimate element in life. Like the others, it may be motivated by cowardice and selfishness. Yet longing for security enters rightfully into love. "Perfect love casteth out fear" which is generated by self-interest, but it stirs concern for the safety of the beloved one. Home is a haven to which its members return at nightfall from the strife of tongues which we call society and from the battle of wits which we term business. In the understanding circles of love and friendship we can dismiss the sentinels which guard our speech and say what we think, knowing that loyal hearts will catch the thoughts which "break through language and escape." Who shall say that the satisfaction of feeling safe with a friend is a mark of cowardice and selfishness? Nay, rather, the security of love is the atmosphere which dispels the self-centered calculating spirit.

Surrounded by a society of polite hostilities where every stranger is viewed as a potential enemy, dwelling amid the false fronts put up to conceal the tawdry interiors of life, living on the defensive and under the strain of pretense, we naturally crave the element of security in some sectors of our existence. Hence we relish it in our religion.

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The present concern for social security shows the popularity of the desire and also the possibility of its socialization. The fact that "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "Rock of Ages" are probably the two most popular hymns in the English-speaking world attests the widespread normal desire for security.

If the church would be true to its Founder, it must incorporate the elements of comfort, shelter, and security. His sensitivity to these hungers has earned for Jesus the continuing title of The Great Physician. The promises of Jesus form a large, precious part of his reported sayings. A discerning editor said recently that were he to return to the pulpit, he would preach a series of sermons on "The Compliments of Jesus." The number of comforting and encouraging remarks recorded of the Master indicates either how largely they bulked in his own thinking or else how much they appealed to the evangelists, or perhaps both.

But the Church is not loyal to its Founder nor to its followers unless it balances its notes of comfort with a proper proportion of challenge. The presentation of religion becomes truly pathological in some parishes, as Professor Meland charges. When a preacher figures on the screen or in press cartoon he is commonly portrayed as a corpulent, comfortable individual whose unctuous words and coddling manner apply salvation as a sort of salve. Mark Twain once reported a saying of Darwin's father that Unitarianism was a feather bed to catch falling Christians. That humorous jibe, of course, does not hit Unitarians any more than other religious groups. It might well describe the soft type of

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religion presented in certain parishes of every communion. Of a certain consoling parson it was said that he gave his congregation "a steady diet of boneless chicken stewed in cream."

Nothing has served to bring Christianity into more disrepute than this softening of the originally heroic gospel. The use of religion as a cushion for the comfortable is as reprehensible as its transformation into an opiate for the underprivileged. When the Great Physician employed the elements of hope and comfort to deaden pain, he used them as an anesthetic preliminary to operating on the cancer of sin. Too many of his followers take them as a habit-forming drug, and then never operate.

It has been said that up to forty, a person seeks pleasure; after forty, he shuns pain. We may not be sure of the exact date of such a transition in temperament, but we do know that all too soon we come on what Wordsworth called "the uncourageous elder years." In fact, a recent writer in *Fortune*, after a survey of various university campuses, summed up the contemporary student type as that of a more or less intelligent turtle who was disposed to keep well under his protective shell lest he "get it in the neck." Such generalizations are no doubt more clever than accurate. Yet it can hardly be denied that there is a current mood of playing safe which pervades even the precincts of youth.

This surrender to the attractions of easy adjustment is one of our most besetting sins. Instead of taking the offensive against the evils around us, we compromise

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and call the makeshift tact. As Ernest Tittle puts it, the fellow who trims the truth makes a hit, while the one who tells the truth gets hit. The most subtle temptation in all this is that of staying away from the hot spots of moral and social struggle. When a ticklish issue is fought in the street, it is easy "to keep quiet within doors," as Job put it. To run away from a fight after one is in it, that clearly labels him a coward; but when one just stays away from a moral struggle, who will know and brand him for that? This art of living in safety zones and keeping silent on critical questions and looking away at embarrassing moments—how well some religious leaders have learned it. A certain diplomat was once described as able to keep silent in six languages. Some preachers, who have the same ability, add to it the proneness to declaim loudly on safe subjects or on the popular side of partisan issues. They even acquire a reputation for courage among the mistaken crowd who think the lightning is in the thunder and jump when the danger is past.

How far these comfortable compromises, these false pretenses of courage are from the quiet, brave honesty of Jesus, who rebuked his fellow guests in the Pharisee's house for seeking the first places at the table. Jesus, who was so gentle in handling fainting and broken spirits, did not tactfully hold his peace simply to avoid embarrassment. He was concerned with saving persons and not with saving faces. His, a healing surgery, was none the less sharp. In fact, it was the sharpness which made it healing.

A good doctor knows when brusqueness is the best

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form of tenderness and when apparent kindness is the worst cruelty. A healthy physician and not a sick patient is the better judge of what is good for the latter. This is a truth which contemporary Christianity needs to recover, for there are too many sections of the church where "the cure of souls" is being regulated by the sick rather than by the healthy-minded.

One way toward the recovery of this needed balance between comfort and challenge is by the principle of alternation. The Fourth Gospel in its portrayal of the Christ Shepherd interprets him as saying, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture." The language suggests the need of alternating the going in and the going out in the sheep's growth. The figure might be carried further into the homely consideration that a farmer lets sheep out to pasture in their growing period to build bone and frame, shutting them up as the time of marketing nears in order to put weight on quickly. In the logic of this comparison we remind ourselves that the Church is not in the business primarily of fattening saints for an immediate heavenly market, but rather of growing children of God into the "stature of the fullness of Christ Jesus our Lord." Hence we should send them out from the sheepfold to the exposures and the exercises of religious aspiration.

Going out to the challenges gives zest to the going in to the securities and sustenance of religion. We do not know the keen edge of a "hunger and thirst after righteousness" until we have gone out to wrestle with unrighteousness. We do not relish Bible reading until we come

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to the book with some problem on which we need light. We do not realize the interest of going into the house of the Lord until we enter it as pupils come to a class in a progressive school with their projects for study. Listlessness and loss of appetite, marked in contemporary religious circles, are largely due to lack of exercise.

As laboratory alternates with lecture room in the study of science, so should they supplement each other in religious development. The reason that many young people drop out of vital church connection is that they never get past the lecture stage of religion into the laboratory stage. They are talked to in Sunday-school classes; they are preached to from the pulpit; but they are seldom, if ever, directed into any challenging experiments in the application of Christian principles.

The time has come when the evangelical churches should retrieve their error in allowing outside cults to capitalize the elements of silence and shelter. Our busily active, committee-ridden congregations should be trained in the technique of "going into the silence." Then instead of gazing dreamily toward the Kingdom of Heaven through the skylight, as do the esoteric groups, they should open the windows of their quieted minds on the street side,

"Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan."

Thus our churchmen would learn the twofold secret of the Palmist, "God is our refuge and strength."

In recovering the balance between comfort and challenge, we need not only the principle of alternation but

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also that of integration. To Marcus Aurelius is attributed the statement that weak men seek retreats, strong men carry them with them. In similar vein Emerson writes: "The great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the serenity of solitude." The Christian ideal lies along this line.

Jesus' prayer for his followers was not that they be taken out of the world, but that they be kept from the evil one. To be in the world and yet not of the world, to have life and have it so abundantly that the germs of evil find no lodging in our healthy minds, that is Christian protectiveness.

To find security not as a shelter from struggle but in the midst of struggle, that is Christian security. Translated into social terms, this would mean, for example, a shift of emphasis from old-age pensions to old-age activities. When medical science is lengthening the age span of activity, it is both wasteful and cruel to shorten the period of employability, and pensions, though necessary, are merely palliatives. The Christian should not ask exemption from effort, either physical or spiritual, for in that struggle he secures possession of his own powers. Human nature, as Professor Hocking has pointed out, is adjusted to maladjustment. It is the hazards which make the zest of the game.

The Christlike spirit has in it that hunger for heroism which comprehends the feeling of George Mallory in his attempts to climb Mount Everest. In explaining his efforts to an American audience, Mallory said, "If you cannot understand that there is something in man which responds to the challenge of this mountain and goes out

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to meet it, that the struggle is the struggle of life itself upward and forever upward, then you won't see why we go." A person trained in the school of Him who "steadfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem" would understand why men try to go up Mount Everest, and would know that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" is to be found only on the other side of the crest.

To find comfort not as a respite from challenge but through challenge, that is the Christian ideal. As the dispirited Jeremiah interpreted Jehovah saying to him, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" so the follower of Christ looks wearily to his Master and hears him say, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." Strange as it may seem, there is something in human nature which finds rest and strength in a yoke. There is no deeper desire of man than the desire to be needed. As John Bright turned from the grave of his wife to give himself to the passage of the Corn Laws, so the Christian finds solace in service.

To seek divine shelter from sin itself and not merely from the consequences of sin, that is the Christian principle. In the light of this truth the Church should recover and reinterpret the doctrine of divine forgiveness. It is not surprising that sturdy young spirits have been estranged from religion by what seemed a coddling conception of God's love. To teach that men could run ruthlessly over the rights of other people and then dash back into the safety of a deathbed repentance gave an

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emphasis to evangelism which made it too soft for the individual and too hard for society.

The late Walter Rauschenbusch left a quatrain which illumines the source of that strength which sustained him under the strain of opposition and opprobrium. These are his lines:

"In the castle of my soul
Is a little postern gate
Whereat, when I enter,
I am in the presence of God."

It was this back door through which the pioneer social prophet could step into the sheltering presence of God that enabled him to maintain such a brave front when he stepped forth to face the dangers besetting his causes. To him God was both refuge and strength, comfort and challenge.

13. THE BALANCE BETWEEN LOCAL LOYALTY AND LARGE OUTLOOK

ONE of the worst sins of our Protestant churches has been provincialism. The preaching of individualistic messages to insulated churches—this is the tragic deterioration of Christ's world-minded movement. Petty denominational meetinghouses dividing the four corners of a village square, competing for the straggling loyalty of their dyed-in-the-wool sectarian flocks—this is all too apt to be the rural church pattern of America. City pastors with their bigger congregations and salaries have often had not much larger outlooks. Many a so-called successful city preacher lifts his eyes unto the balconies whence cometh his strength. If they be well-filled, he feels that the kingdom is coming.

City or countryside may be religiously disorganized. There may be no strategic planning for the community as a whole. While new churches may be located with no attention to denominational comity, old churches may be allowed to continue long past the day of their usefulness. Most of our cities are littered with left-over churches. In an eastern city the church census a few years ago showed more than five hundred Protestant churches. They minister to a combined membership equal in numbers to that served by sixty-nine Roman Catholic parishes. Let us be thankful that such Protes-

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tant provincialism and sectarian short-sightedness have begun to stir a reaction.

Many influences now at work enlarge the outlook of churchmen. The federation movement brings some semblance of unified strategy into both urban and rural church situations. The gestures toward church unity, though unable to make much headway against barriers of denominational officialdom and invested funds, arouse the laity to the travesty of present divisions. Local congregations come together in many communities with or without the blessing of their ecclesiastical supervisors.

The radio carries voices across sectarian lines, bringing the ends of the earth to the ears of all. Theological education is widening the horizons of our younger ministers and the trend of students is toward those seminaries which offer a city laboratory for larger religious experimental work. Youth conferences are challenging our future leaders with questions of wide social import, such as world peace, racial brotherhood, and industrial justice. These themes figure more and more in the sermons of our time. When pessimists assert that preachers will present arms in a future war as in the past, the reply might well be that there is no adequate precedent for that assertion, since pulpits have recently been preaching peace to a degree never approached before any preceding war.

Along with this lifting of horizons, however, has gone a loosening of local loyalties. Higher education, though it has emancipated youth from many petty provincialisms, has often made its products unwilling to settle

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down in the communities from which they sprang. Boys leave the farms because life there is too slow. Main Street's tawdriness has been so played up that it is considered intolerable. Hence the migration moves toward larger cities, but when the masses reach metropolitan centers they are still more disinclined to permanence. The landless nomads of the apartment house, here today and gone tomorrow, may have a vague general interest in Kingdom building, but they assume little if any responsibility for the local church, the public school, or the other civic institutions. They are like the Scotsman who wished to show his generosity without being too specific and therefore put into his will the bequest of "five hundred pounds to the widow of the Unknown Soldier."

Ease of travel, added to the trend toward the cities, has developed a kind of chain-store mentality, which causes people to mistake movement for progress and to measure success by the size of their locations. In our city centers we see a centralization of business and a decentralization of civic responsibility, with the result that our money-making centers are governed by political machines made possible through an irresponsible and transient population.

A few months ago in a Pennsylvania city the writer noticed a motor trailer advertised for sale under the intriguing sign, "Another Covered Wagon." As was intended, the sign turned the observer's thought back to the old covered wagon of the pioneers. Many contrasts came quickly to mind. The modern trailer had pneumatic tires, electric heating, and other latest con-

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veniences, whereas the old covered wagon was crude, hard, ugly. There is still another difference. The trailer goes south in the winter and treks north in the summer; it goes with the climate. The old covered wagon, on the other hand, helped to change the moral and social climate of the community to which it went. In short, the motor trailer symbolizes a generation of movers, while the covered wagon belonged to a generation of "settlers."

It is that settler spirit which must be recovered to balance our enlarged outlooks. Can the Church contribute its influence toward this end? Well, it must be admitted that the clergy itself has caught the contagion of restlessness. One has but to mingle with ministers to discover how many are eager to move. Many of them deserve to move and many a congregation deserves to have its minister move. The itinerant plan of ministration has shown its aptitude in relieving awkward, parish maladjustments. Yet relieving awkward situations does not cure awkwardness, and we venture the generalization that there is too much itinerancy in today's ministry. As long as preachers and teachers treat each position as merely a steppingstone to a next larger assignment, they are poor cultivators of the soil for the "settler spirit." The religious leader ought to build himself into the life of a community. He may not know how long he is to live there, but let him plan his work as if for the rest of his life; and he will find himself laying a foundation on which almost any community, however small, offers possibilities worth while.

In a small New England city a young pastor made

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such a record of parish cultivation and pulpit ministration that a church, more socially attractive, became interested in him. It was a real temptation to leave a congregation decidedly below his cultural attainments. Still he stuck to his post. That decision seemed to release new powers in him and a new responsiveness in his people. It was a present-day demonstration of the promise made to the disciples of old, "Tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high." This disciple remained in his Jerusalem, the place of difficulty, until the power came.

In developing these essential local loyalties, there must be a recovered exaltation of the pastorate. The expansion of denominational organizations has tended toward an officialism overshadowing the pulpit. The pattern of success imprinted on a preacher's mind is a graduation upward from pastorate to board-secretaryship, college presidency, or bishopric. Such a conception militates against the growth of great preaching and strong churches. The weakest spot in the present ecclesiastical system is the pulpit. Most denominations are top-heavy. Of what avail is the vast organizational machinery if the local churches lack the spark to generate the power? That is the weakness today. Great preaching and great churches are advanced by patient sustained effort, by a pastor and people who resist the mood of transiency.

Cultivation of local loyalties is essential to the individual for securing the most solid satisfactions. The person whose attitude toward his community is that of using it without any willingness to be used by it, very

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soon begins to feel that he is not getting out of it all that he should. He grows restless and dissatisfied.

This lack of permanent residence is all of a piece with the general restlessness of mind. There is a Hebrew proverb which hits off the contemporary mood: "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting." The chase is so alluring that even a lazy man will hunt, but he does not prepare what is caught for use. The hunter continues chasing, collecting a litter of unused or half-used trophies. So men run after the latest thing, and fail to develop the lasting thing. Their reading is sketchy and superficial. They run through their friendships in their eagerness for "better connections." They spoil their use and enjoyment of the place where they are by looking over the fence at the place where they would like to be. Henry James tells the story of the man who ruined his youth by envying the possessions of others and then spoiled his maturity by efforts to make others envy him. Such is the fate of the person who fails to learn that the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, and their like, are grown by intensive cultivation of local areas.

Local loyalties are necessary not only for personal satisfactions but also for social progress. The great projects of public welfare are now lagging through the lack of local cultivation, more than from almost any other cause. Michael Williams said some time ago that the peace movement needed something which would do for it a service similar to that which the Salvation Army had rendered to religion—namely, the bringing of it to the man on the street. The discussions of peace

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must reach down from academic and diplomatic circles to the habitat of the people. When the people show a will, the politicians usually find a way. So also with race adjustments. A foreign missionary interest in saving colored peoples of the Orient does not save a church which is racially intolerant at home.

The enlarging of outlook is freeing us from old provincialisms; now we need a balancing cultivation of local loyalties to keep our emancipated spirituality from evaporating into vague generalities. John Henry Jowett, with his hauntingly beautiful way of coining figures, once likened the mind of Saint Paul to a skylark in its motion. Saint Paul's mind, he said, would mount up like an ethereal minstrel pilgrim of the skies to the point where he could songfully survey the world; but, like the skylark, Paul always kept his nest on the ground. The bird does it to keep its body warm; Paul, to keep his spirit from growing cold. Every Christian should have a skylark motion to his mind, rising up to get the world outlooks, yet maintaining his local loyalties to keep his spirit warm.

III. THE RECOVERY OF RADIANCE

14. Losing the Original Radiance
15. Recovering Man from the Machine
16. Rekindling the Emotions
17. Remaking Duties into Desires
18. Recalling the Witnesses
19. Rediscovering the Gates of God



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14. LOSING THE ORIGINAL RADIANCE

IT has been said that the word "excitement" best describes the first immediate effect of contact with Jesus when he was here upon the earth. There was a quickening of life when the Great Physician appeared. The sight of his face seemed to send a strange flutter through the minds of men, even the demented.

At first crowds ran after him much as people run to a fire. As his ministry progressed and his mission passed its first stages, the people approached Jesus not so much as crowds run to a conflagration but as persons in a room gather around a grate fire. Little children came to him out of the cold Palestinian nursery in which children were to be seen and not heard. Cold intellectuals felt the lure of his radiant, vital teaching, and like Nicodemus sought the secret of his appeal. The poor and the oppressed came up out of their cellared existence to bask in the warming presence of one in whom was life and "the life was the light of men."

The radiance of Jesus was contagious. We follow the Acts of the Apostles almost as if they were the movements of fireflies in the night. The enthusiasm which came at Pentecost could only be symbolized by fire.

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The glowing warmth of those early Christian experiences melted a way into the cold Mediterranean world. The icicled springs of human nature, frozen by the wintriness of the Stoic climate, were thawed out in the spring which came to men's souls through the gospel of Christ. The radiant face of Stephen as the stones fell on him lingered on the memory of Saul until a brighter and more blinding light shone round about him on the Damascus road.

The original Christians were not a somber company. They had caught the spirit of him "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross." They shared their hardships with a sense of privilege. They had the fresh enthusiasm of new citizens who had just been naturalized and were "no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints." In the words of Peter's epistle they looked to their gospel as "unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn."

The normal healthy Christian is a radiant personality. Radiance is fire under control. Uncontrolled enthusiasm was not encouraged by Jesus. He rebuked the woman whose admiration effervesced in frothy emotionalism, and reminded men: "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." A radiant spirit is one through whose being there surges a quiet and sustaining current, giving an incandescent light to his eyes, a warming glow to his smile, and a kindling contagion to his goodness. "His delight is in the law of the Lord." He is not of those who drag themselves toward their duties with grim

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tenseness and dour face, who by their evident displeasure in the doing of their duties are responsible for the little girl's prayer, "O Lord, make all the bad people good, and all the good people nice."

It has become now a common observation to say that the original and normal radiance of the Christian religion has been dimmed. If one were to contrast the attitudes of a conventional modern church with a company of apostolic Christians, the difference would be somewhat similar to that between the adults and the children on Christmas morning when the bewhiskered Saint Nicholas dashes into the room. The grown-ups go through the same motions, but not the same emotions as do the little ones. The glow on the face of early Christianity has gone, and all the artificial methods of church publicity and spectacular promotion cannot put it back again; for, as Doctor Gaius Glenn Atkins reminds us, there is a difference between sunshine and limelight.

Many influences have helped to dampen the enthusiasms of a once radiant Christianity. For one thing, our historic faith suffered the slowing down which almost inevitably comes with the transition of a religious movement into an established institution. The spontaneity and enthusiasm of the starting time slacken. A new religious group loses momentum as it takes on the loads of institutionalism. Weighted down with organization, the church sticks more and more to the paved roads of conventionalism and ceases those cross-country dashes and short cuts which gave zest and adventure to the earlier seekers after God. "Like a mighty army moves

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the Church of God" in one respect at least; it moves much more slowly than "the faith of our fathers" which began as a scouting party spying out the Promised Land.

This slackening of pace may be seen in our more contemporary religious movements. The pioneering enthusiasm of the first generation of Christian Scientists apparently does not pass on with undiminished glow to their children. Faith which comes secondhand carries the added weight of experience, but lacks the zeal of firsthand experiment.

Furthermore the bigness of individual churches, as well as the growth of institutionalism, often tends to dim the radiance of personal religious interest. There is, of course, a point below which smallness smothers the spirit of a local church; but it is also true that large churches often lose some of their per capita zeal as their numbers increase. It is another manifestation of dwarfing pressure of numbers seen in urban life. A New York church founded in 1883 recently changed its site and structure. In looking up the records, the present minister found the first annual report of the first pastor. It contained the information that the membership of the parish was 88 and the average prayer meeting attendance was 45 2-3. Just what "two-thirds" of a prayer meeting attendant would be is a bit hard to imagine, but it might well suggest the male contingent of a modern midweek service. This city church has grown numerically, but the individual interest, as measured at least by the old standards, has lessened.

Moreover, it is not surprising that religious institutions should have lost some of their luster in view of

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the recent social weather through which we have been passing. The 1920's were a decade which took the shine off almost everything. In its cold air of disillusionment, the man on the street buttoned up his better nature, pulled down the vizor of his vision, and went around looking for the fingerprints of vice rather than the footprints of virtue. The college sophomore thought it sentimental to show any idealism or enthusiasm and was determined to appear wise to all worldliness. The emancipated young woman reacted so far from the clinging vine type of girlhood that a sort of desert cactus variety of femininity was developed. The debunking school of biography toppled our traditional heroes from their pedestals of respect and pointed out their feet of clay, while the current fiction and drama depicted the average man as little above the moron.

The frosty cynicism of the period fell on many of the old sanctities. The time-honored institution of marriage was shown up as simply a social ceremony cloaking selfish interests and sex instincts. From the great deep emotion of love was removed most of its romance, somewhat as the lunch counter has reduced the art of dining, conversation, and comradeship, to the crude act of eating, a satisfaction of one single instinct. Scott Fitzgerald, fresh from college, described his contemporaries as "a generation grown up to find all gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken."

It was a time when men ran feverishly after new thrills and then quickly tired of them. Novelties flashed upon us with the speed of an accelerated cinema. Frederick Lewis Allen in a revealing paragraph lists some of

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the things which were not known to the American of 1919: Radio broadcasting, Coue, the Dayton trial, crossword puzzles, bathing beauty contests, John J. Raskob, racketeers, Teapot Dome, Coral Gables, the American Mercury, Sacco and Vanzetti, companionate marriage, brokers' loan statistics, Michael Arlen, the Wall Street Explosion, confession magazines, the Hall-Mills case, radio stock, speak-easies, Al Capone, automatic traffic lights, or Charles A. Lindbergh.¹ As one's mind clicks over those items, he is reminded not only how quickly new interests arrived but also how speedily they departed. In a time of such rapidly fading enthusiasms, the wonder is that religion came through as well as it did.

Religion's lack of radiance is, however, more than a loss of surface shine. President Angell, speaking last spring at the fiftieth anniversary of the Yale Christian Association, admitted that the religious activities on that campus are now patronized by few as compared with earlier years. In explanation, as reported in the press, he said that some turn away from the student religious services because they feel their beliefs already decided, some stay away because they do not wish to seem overpious, but the greater number are "wholly indifferent to religion and occupied, like their parents, with other matters." While it is true that church statistics show the growth in membership somewhat more than keeping pace with the increase of population, the fact is that scarcely half of our citizenry are listed on parish rolls, and in the Protestant section of these, only about one-third are sufficiently interested to be in their places of worship on Sunday. The indifferent attend-

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ance and the lukewarm unconcern of nominal church members disprove any feeling that the church is "on fire for God."

At Dartmouth College there is a mural by the modernistic Mexican artist Orozco, satirizing the sterility of education. It depicts a skeleton giving birth to another skeleton, dry bones recreating dry bones. The college professors are portrayed as proceeding with their unrealistic teaching while behind them the world is going up in flames and they heed it not. That satire on certain schools of learning might apply equally well to large sections of the church. Against the background of a world now burning with zeal of nationalism and passion of class consciousness, churches drag through their routines with listless indifference.

To be sure, churchmen are not indifferent to the secular fires which rage around them. Fear of communism is becoming feverish in many church circles. Roman Catholic spokesmen bring this peril into almost every public utterance, for they know well the danger of disestablishment in lands which succumb to communistic programs. Laymen likewise grow heatedly excited at the mention of the hated word, for they fear dispossession of property. Also the threat of nationalism is beginning to stir the church consciousness, since the sorry spectacle of Hitlerism has come to light. But we must not mistake the fever of fear for the healthy glow of religious enthusiasm. Zeal generated by friction with outside foes is not the "fervor of spirit," advocated by the apostle Paul.

Looking back at its loss of radiance, the church can-

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not quite take to itself the words of Lowell, but it can appreciate their nearness of parallel:

"O glorious youth, that once was mine!
Oh, high Ideal! all in vain
Ye enter at this ruined shrine
Whence worship ne'er shall rise again;
The bat and owl inhabit here,
The smoke rests in the altar stone,
The sacred vessels molder near,
The image of the God is gone."

15. RECOVERING MAN FROM THE MACHINE

THE modern rise of the machine has been accompanied by a new fall of man. The steam engine was invented at about the time that the Declaration of Independence was signed. In our Western world the prevailing social and political philosophies of that period were embodied in the theories of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine. According to their views, man was pretty well able to master his own destiny if freed from the restrictions with which tradition had tied him down. Give him education, a free press, and a ballot box and he could create his own paradise. He did not need much government nor much help from God. Hence, organized religion was at low ebb in the first days of our republic.

The invention of the steam engine and the industrial machines which rapidly followed seemed at first to expand and enhance man's sense of mastery over his environment. But it was not long before men discovered that these machines were creating an environment which in turn reacted to shape human behavior. As a result there developed an intensive study of economic science with its emphasis on the control which material environment exercises over man's conduct.

Then about the middle of the nineteenth century came Darwin with his theory of evolution, bringing with it an emphasis on the study of biological science, tending

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to show how much behavior is determined by the blood stream and the hereditary factors. And then at the turn of the twentieth century appeared Freud ushering in the "new psychology" era throwing the spotlight on the instinctive and subconscious elements and playing these up as the formative influences of human conduct.

Thus during the century and a half of the industrial machine age, there have been three major emphases—the economic, the biological, and the "new" psychological—all stressing the factors in behavior which lie beyond the range of the individual's moral responsibility. The total impact has been to lessen man's sense of personal, ethical accountability. Our best scientists, let it be said, did not surrender to the behavioristic and mechanistic theories; but the popularizers of science, who kept their ears just close enough to the keyhole of the laboratories to overhear and garble their reports, gave to the public the impression that the concepts of will and conscience were hopelessly out of date.

Theodore Dreiser, for instance, frequently hailed a decade ago as the dean of American novelists, wrote *An American Tragedy*, in which he traced the tragic career of a lad from his sordid beginnings in the Middle West to his death in an Eastern electric chair, and he interpreted the whole proceeding on what one reviewer called an "animal theory of conduct." He admitted that the boy had some noble sentiments and ideals, but these flitted over his mind with the futility of patches of sunlight and shadow chasing each other across a spring landscape. The driving powers, as he would have us believe, were in the blood stream and

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the economic environment. Under such an interpretation, the lad was hardly more than a pawn in the play of forces beyond his control.

Of similar stripe is the off-quoted succinct description given by another high priest of the post-war cult of interpreters, who defined man as "a sick fly taking a dizzy ride on a gigantic flywheel." With such pictures of human nature repeatedly held before him, man's sense of personal accountability naturally weakened. The tendency was to shift the blame for misconduct to the factors beyond his responsibility and to regard himself as little more than a mechanism. When the individual falls into this alibi-offering mood he is on the way down, and when our industrial civilization puts titanic machine power into the hands of men with a mechanistic view of themselves, it is heading for disaster.

This is a broad generalization of what has been happening. There are now signs which portend a recovery of man from the machine. The mechanistic and behavioristic schools are on the wane. We are coming to see that the overweening prestige of the physical factors in life has been due to the preponderant attention accorded them, and that the inner initiating factors of life, such as the conscience, the will, and the imagination, can be lifted to public regard if they be given comparable study. Toward such study there is now a decided turn.

This trend is reflected in the social sciences. The breakdown of the industrial machine during the last decade might be likened to the wreck of a motor car equipped with a Lincoln engine, a Ford set of brakes

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and bicycle lamps. That is, our industrial system had tremendous drive, weak controls, and dim headlights. Hence came the smashup. And now out of the wreckage leaders are picking themselves up to see that there must be a threefold overhauling. The motive power must be changed from a mastering of men for the making of things, to the mastering of things for the making of men. This concern for human values, to be sure, is not voluntary yet with many, but it is being forced on the recalcitrant ones. Then, too, it is seen that the controls must be strengthened against the possibility of the strong grinding down the weak and the greed for gain running away with both. And, also, the headlights must be revamped, for the faster we go the farther ahead it is necessary to see, and individual careers and social programs must be planned with longer foresight and greater flexibility to match the rapidity of change.

Our social sciences are due for a revival in popular interest and respect. Humbled by the collapse of their earlier neat niceties of calculation, the social scientists are realizing that they cannot reduce the rich complex of human nature to bread-and-butter theories of history or to the exact regimentation of mathematics. "Life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment." The recognition of this surplus something in man heightens the spiritual conception of his nature. It is coming to be seen that the machine, like the Sabbath, is made for man and not man for the machine. Shrewd business judgment is now discovering that men are not only the makers of things but the buyers of them, and therefore human welfare is essential to industrial expansion. Thus

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into the directors' room is being driven that concern for man which was central to the teaching given the disciples. This rescue of man from the overshadowing machine is an essential preliminary to the propagation of the gospel among our industrial groups, which up to date has so tragically lagged.

There is a second relationship between man and the machine which affects the recovery of religious radiance. The machine age has made life easier physically and thereby harder morally. When it is said that life is easier physically, it should not be forgotten that certain factory and mining conditions are still veritably enslaving, that some sections of our country are yet under the blight of child labor, and that the plight of the share croppers is a stigma not yet removed. But by and large, living and working conditions are more comfortable than in the days of our fathers. Our houses have more conveniences, our hours of work are shorter, our modes of travel are infinitely more pleasant. We are approaching the agreeable physical adjustment of the Harvard student who, after signing up, chuckled to his roommate: "I haven't a class before ten o'clock in the morning or up more than one flight of stairs."

But these easier shorter hours of work create a more difficult moral problem. What did the artisan or farmer of seventy-five years ago desire when he had finished his daily fourteen hours of toil? He wanted rest, quiet, and solitude. But what does the office worker or factory worker crave when he is free at four or five o'clock in the afternoon? Rest and quiet and solitude? Not at all. Our contemporaries want excitement, entertain-

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ment, and thrill; and they have the lengthened leisure and the unspent physical energies with which to enjoy them. If one wishes to get the contrast between the former days and our own, let him stand some afternoon on a city street and repeat Gray's "Elegy." The opening lines suggest the changed tempo:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

There is not one item that fits the present situation whether in the city, the village, or even on the farm.

Preachers and parents cannot meet this present problem of leisure by rebuke and repression. It is not enough to inveigh against the current pleasure-seeking and tell people what they must not do. We must help to provide some wholesome outlets for this lengthened leisure. It may well be claimed that the churches and the communities have made admirable progress in providing recreational facilities for our youth. With our church parish houses, high school gymnasiums, and community playgrounds, we are developing an adequate and, in some places, an excessive equipment for the young people's activities.

But what are our adults doing with their increasing leisure? The pleasures of our Babbitts are pitifully superficial. The reading matter of our Rotarians, Kiwanians, and leading laymen is light enough so that he who runs may read. The amount of time spent by our capable women in waiting for their fellow bridge play-

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ers to lead, and the amount of thought given to that leading would, if channeled properly, remake our civic and social life. The cultural and intellectual pursuits of our college-trained citizens would hardly give proof of their academic degrees. All too many of our university products have received their education by a cistern method of instruction. That is, they keep their minds more or less open to catch the information which drips off the eaves of the professors' minds; and then at examination time they drop a paper down to see if it gets wet. Sometimes it comes out fairly wet, and sometimes not so wet. But all this collection of factual data taps no artesian spring of mental interest, and they leave the campus without a sufficient passion for study or cultural interests to keep their minds progressively active in their later years.

College-trained parents are often not keeping abreast of the growing mental interests of their high school children. In this fact is to be found one reason for the inability of the home to hold the youth in in the evenings. And all this has a profound reaction on the religious life of a community. The family circle is the forum for the clarification of the ideas disseminated by school and church. The pulpit seeds which have most seminal potency in the minds of the young are those which have been sifted and discussed around family firesides. Without a mentally progressive adult membership and this mutual exchange of ideas within households, the church lacks its most effective aid.

The church, even more than the school, must lead in a really serious program of adult education. Some par-

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ishes are conducting institutes which include cultural and social studies as well as the religious. But the church at large has hardly begun to play with the problem. A well-read ministry will not make an enthusiastic church without a well-read laity. Every church should guide and provide devotional and cultural reading for its members. The effectiveness of study in generating zeal is to be seen in the women's missionary societies. While missions throughout the church have been lagging through diminishing funds, the women's programs have forged steadily ahead, because they have maintained their courses of regular and systematic study. It is the diet of the mind which determines the degree of enthusiasm.

And without a revival of study there will be no genuine or lasting revival of religion. The lack of educational follow-up has been the weak spot in our evangelism. We tried to convert the wills without transforming the ideas and the tastes. Our old-fashioned "protracted meetings" were often sufficiently protracted, but the conversions were not. The backsliding set in too soon after the trail-hitting. The converts had moved their wills over into the Kingdom of God, but their minds still dwelt back among their sordid and sinful desires. The result demonstrated the truth of Baudouin's "law of reversed effort" that when the will and the imagination are in conflict, the imagination wins the day. The pictures hung in the mind have more power than the will. Not long ago we had a certain president of the United States whose will sat in the White House honestly trying to conduct a good administration, but

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whose tastes kept company with a corrupt coterie in a little house on a side street. Eventually the house on the side street won over the White House and the end was scandal and tragedy. Effective evangelism requires religious education.

The machine has created an industrial system and a lengthened leisure which we have not yet Christianized. But it can be made into a mighty ally for spiritual and cultured recovery. With the time and facilities which the machine has given us, we can promote a new Renaissance of learning along with a new Reformation of religion. And each must go with the other.

16. REKINDLING THE EMOTIONS

AS this page is being written, the New York press is urging the adjournment of Congress on the ground that Washington in July is not conducive to calm and temperate judgment. Recent events reveal the frayed nerves and heated passions of our public servants. Even into the valley of the shadow of death, warring factions have carried their struggles for a place in the sun. Ours is a time of lost tempers and lost heads. The heat of friction engendered by factions in our political and industrial life has called forth the use of Shakespeare's exclamation, "A plague o' both your houses," and it has a wider application than to the particular situation pointed by our president.

No previous period ever seemed to call more clearly than ours for Paul's counsel, "Let your moderation be known of all men." In these days of single-track reformers, widening social chasms, and embittered partisanship, the ill-dispositions are not to be reconciled by extremists and fanatics who lack the spirit of forbearance. We need men of telescopic sympathy as well as of microscopic specialty, men of temperate judgment rather than of superheated emotions, men whose minds, like our improved highways, are being broadened to carry more than one line of thought.

As Edmund Burke once said, "Moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of

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distrust for ourselves are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our natures as they contribute to our repose and fortune." Human nature is dignified when a leader rises above the dusty scramble of party politics and factional strife, and in calm, cool tones voices the counsel of moderation and forbearance.

Life flourishes best in the temperate zone. This is true both spiritually and physically. As our greatest national cultures have been developed in earth's temperate belts, so our virtues are healthiest in the moderate temperatures. Without moderation justice becomes severity, caution verges into suspicion, amiability deteriorates into flabbiness, economy tightens into frugality, and thrift hardens into meanness and avarice.

Jesus was himself an illuminating example of healthy moderation. There was nothing of the narrow fanatic about the man who dined both with Pharisees and publicans, who chose ostracized Samaritans as the heroes of his parables, and paid high compliments to the faith of Roman centurions. The Master was free from that hot impatience which so frequently mars the reformer. He did not wear the tense expression shown by the man of one idea. Although driven to the cross by the devilishness of men, he had no sin-obsession which made him look for the evil motives lurking behind the words and the works of others.

Jesus manifested the emotional reserve of a gentleman and the restraint of an artist. The truly adult mind, tempered by reflection, is against the sentimental in

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love, the gaudy in painting, the rhetorical in literature, the noisily emotional in religion. The artist appreciates and practices the principle of restrained expression. "The most passionate music is not the most luscious; a great violinist scorns the tremolo. Beethoven speaks more quietly but no less intensely than Tschaikowsky; pathos is not limited to symphonies labeled 'Pathetique.' The classic lyrics are chiseled understatements of emotion." ¹

The art of Christian living involves this reserve and restraint. It develops a distaste for hysteria and effervescent enthusiasm. It avoids that uncontrolled passion which "burns us up" and then so quickly burns us out. It shines by the principle of incandescence, in which it is the very restraint which creates the glow. It brings the contents of life from the garish artificial lamp to the light of day, knowing that the sunlight intensifies the colors.

But this desirable and necessary temperate zone has its danger spots. The temptation of temperance is toward lukewarmness, against which the New Testament warns as forcibly as against the lack of moderation. "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth." When a life has grown lukewarm, it is like salt without savor; it is fit only to be cast out. Lukewarmness is the temperature at which life, like water, becomes nauseating. Consider the testimony of a surgeon discussing his observations of boredom, "the most deadly of diseases." He says: "There is more real wretchedness, more torment driving men to folly, or to what ministers call sin, due to bore-

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dom than there is to anything else. Men and women will do almost anything to escape it; they drink, drug themselves, prostitute their bodies and sell their souls; they will take up mad causes, organize absurd crusades, fling themselves into lost hopes and crazy ventures; they will torment themselves and torture other people to escape the misery of being bored."

When interest grows lukewarm, life becomes boredom, artistry loses its inspiration, writing deteriorates into hack work, love turns to ashes, and religion is hollowed into sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. In reaction from lukewarmness, emotions may drift into the temporarily comfortable stupor which accompanies the state of freezing to death. Tepid churches have given birth to an untold amount of cold skepticism. Or the reaction from lukewarmness may be toward the heat of passion. Evidences of this latter trend are visible on many sides. In literature there is appearing a preference for more fire and less polish. In politics the energy and zeal of a Mussolini with his almost mad Caesarism and of a Hitler with his fantasies of nationalism are capturing the loyalties of youthful legions. In religion larger numbers are turning to the movements which have an even fanatical zeal than to those which are better reasoned but lacking in warmth.

There is a visible rebound from the cold rationalism and cynical sophistication of the intelligentsia. The Student Christian Movement in the Middle Atlantic Region has recently issued a handbook in which a new religious cleavage appears. Disillusioned by the divisions between Modernists and Fundamentalists, these

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young people call for a "fellowship of men and women who desire to be definitely, personally, radically Christian." And into this fellowship apparently are coming adherents from both liberal and conservative theological camps. They voice a hunger for reality. They realize that the real religious division of the campuses is not along theological lines but between those who care and those who do not. And those leaders who do care desperately may, like Reinhold Niebuhr, be economically left and theologically right, or vice versa, but they do have a following.

Are we headed for a revival of healthy emotion or uncontrolled emotionalism, for Christian moderation or fanatical zeal?

Let us test ourselves as to the genuineness of our moderation. Is ours a Christian moderation generated by information or a lukewarmness begotten of ignorance? It is one thing to keep a temperate judgment because we see that there are rights and wrongs on both sides of a question; it is quite another to be cool because we have not taken the pains to inform ourselves. Many a judgment is calm because the mind is empty. Religious issues and public questions may leave us cold because we have been living in such little provincial spheres that we have not felt ourselves touched by them. Mental laziness is a counterfeit for moderation which passes current in many circles. Many minds seem broad when they have only become shallow, like sluggish rivers in the lowlands.

Consider the present issue between China and Japan. If we have no strong opinions regarding that Far Eastern

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conflict simply because it is so far east and we have not informed ourselves about the issues involved, there is no virtue in such coolheadedness. It is merely the lukewarmness of ignorance. But if we are refraining from jumping to intemperate conclusions until we find out more facts; if we are trying to visualize the people behind the governmental policies, realizing that it is not fair to indict a whole people; if in denouncing the Japanese tactics of breaking treaties and biting off slices of territory whenever the other nations are too busy elsewhere to prevent it, we realize that not every Japanese is an imperialist but that many of them are peace-loving like Kagawa; if we can condemn the governmental policy without hating the individual persons, then we are showing true Christian moderation.

Householders have learned that their rooms can be kept cooler by closing the windows and blinds during the bright daylight hours and by opening them only at night. Similarly, minds may be kept cool by the same principle, but such air-conditioning is not Christlike. Christian moderation is not preserved by shutting our eyes to the wrongs and injustices, the troubles and problems around us. The function of the Church is to help men see more of the world's injustices and crucial issues than are visible from the street level. The Church, if true to its Founder, does not share the feeling that "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Jesus would have his followers trust the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—free from blinding prejudice, free from dark fears.

A second test. Is ours a moderation begotten of deep

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feeling or a lukewarmness due to shallow indifference? It costs little to be tolerant in a matter about which we do not care deeply, but there is no such thing as Christian tolerance unless we do care. The truly tolerant person is one who takes an attitude of understanding toward the other side, but if he has no loyalty to his own side there is no broad-mindedness involved in being brotherly toward the opposition. Neutrality is often paraded as moderation.

There is, for instance, a vast difference between the non-churchman glibly proclaiming his friendship for all religious faiths, and the devout Protestant or Roman Catholic or Jew earnestly trying to develop a feeling of good will. The former is neutral, the latter is tolerant. The journey toward inter-faith understanding is not to be advanced by the smooth and superficial utterances of dilettantes in religion who dabble a little on the edges of various groups but never wholeheartedly commit themselves to any. The road to religious brotherhood lies by way of those who, loyal to the best in their own group, are looking to find the best in others.

What we need today is men who are warm-hearted enough to be dynamic and cool-headed enough to be considerate. That is the twofold quality which Christ's spirit has succeeded in giving to some men. Paul, for example, as a young man was fanatically zealous, "breathing out fire and slaughter" against those he regarded as the foes of his faith. But as a mature man he came to write his immortal words on love: "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. . . . Now abideth faith, hope,

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love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Paul's youthful zeal had not died out, but it had been transformed by the years from a destructive flame to a kindling glow radiating love to those around him.

So was it with John Wesley. As a young missionary to the settlers in Georgia, he exhibited a narrowness bordering on fanaticism. The report is that he withheld the sacrament of communion from a young lady who had refused his offer of marriage. But later, after his heart was "strangely warmed" in a London prayer meeting, Wesley became so broadly tolerant that he overstepped sectarian lines, saying, "If thy heart is as my heart, give me thy hand." He lost his hotheadedness and gained a genuine warmheartedness. The extremists are usually persons whose hearts are cool while their heads become hot. Warmhearted people are seldom fanatical. It is these for whom our divided society calls today.

A third test. Is ours a lukewarmness due to weakness or a moderation derived from strength? Anemic natures have no strong surge of desire. On the other hand, there is a grace of flexibility in strength, a gentleness in gianthood. The man who is conscious of his power does not always feel the need of brandishing his arms to display his force. When persons feel the strength of their positions, they can afford to be moderate. The scientist who is certain of the correctness of his findings can keep calm as did S. F. B. Morse while awaiting congressional action on his new invention. He knows that time is on his side and can await the verdict. As Isaiah saw, "He that believeth shall not be in haste."

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It was this moderation born of confident strength which Jesus manifested. In Pilate's court under attack and cross-examination, Jesus showed no vehemence. Calmly he said, "I came to bear witness of the truth. He that is of the truth heareth my voice." His voice might not be heard that day. But truth can trust the centuries against the hours. As Maxwell Anderson makes Mary of Scotland stand erect before the victorious Elizabeth and say, "Nevertheless, I win," so Christ stood before Pilate and so the follower of Christ should stand before the "whips and scorns of time." If the Church, instead of getting flustered by frustration and angered by its critics, were to maintain a calm, well-tempered air of confidence in its own divine strength, it would do more than in almost any other way to recover public respect.

Christian moderation also manifests its strength by forbearance. The strong person does not push his advantage to the limit. The grace of moderation is tested as severely when we are on top as when we are on the bottom. Lack of forbearance on the part of God's ordained representatives when they held the whip hand is largely responsible for their being under the lash in certain lands today. And in a recent royal tragedy, the church came near to repeating this error. When the churches are fighting for their lives against domineering forces in several parts of the earth today, it behooves the churches of the free lands to show their spiritual strength by their institutional forbearance.

A fourth test. Is ours a lukewarmness due to cowardice or a moderation derived from courage? When

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we take the middle road, it may not be because of our desire to see both sides but to see the safe side.

Sometime ago the writer happened to be in a town where a consumer's co-operative was being tried. A professor in the college located there was an unquestioning believer in the project. Viewing it from the standpoint of the consumer, he could see nothing but benefit in the venture. Another acquaintance, a merchant, was frankly opposed to the experiment, which seemed to him a direct attack on his livelihood. The driver who took the writer to the train said that he was taking no sides in the controversy, that he was keeping his mind open to see how it would work out for the best. He sounded very broadminded. But his real motive came out at the end of the conversation when he said, "I have to depend on both sides for my garage business." He was not really keeping his mind open, but his pocket open. He was not trying to see both sides of the question, but the side on which his bread was buttered. And that is the way with many who camouflage their yellow streaks with the color of broad-mindedness.

But while the middle ground may be chosen by timid souls as a safety zone, it may also be the region requiring the greatest courage. When one goes with a partisan group, he is at least sure of company. He is surrounded by like-minded comrades. But when he takes an independent course, he is exposed to attack from both sides. To counsel moderation when others are making themselves popular by playing on passions, is to invite the charge of being weak-kneed. And to stop in one's

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tracks and acknowledge error, while the rest are rushing headlong past you, that requires the rarest form of courage.

Yet what a salutary effect that kind of courageous temperance exerts. Suppose that today a partisan leader in one of our bitter political or industrial or international struggles were to arise magnanimously and acknowledge his mistakes and change of mind, it would be hard to overestimate the wholesome influence of such a deed. Neville Chamberlain, in one of his first speeches as new Prime Minister, likened the European situation to mountainous snowbanks of hatreds so poised that a voice might release them and start an avalanche. A true and striking description. A careless word from a European court might start an avalanche of war. But is it not also true that the voice of a leader, raised in magnanimous acknowledgment of his own wrong policy and change of mind, might start an avalanche of mutual forgiveness?

There are many evidences that men are ready for a rekindling of religious emotions. The current mood is away from cold intellectualism. The issue of tomorrow is between being "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" and being fiery in temper, destroying one another. Can religious forces of the earth arouse sufficient zeal through love to match the passionate loyalties kindled by fear and friction? It is much easier, of course, to generate fervor by friction than by love. The most lukewarm Protestant is usually brought to the boiling point when he sees danger from Rome. The careless crowd will flock to hear a "fighting parson" flay political bosses and

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corrupt playwrights for the same reason that thousands will turn out to see a man knocked out in a prize fight, while only a few medical students will come around to the clinic the following day to see him patched up. We have certain conspicuous cases in New York where ministers are heard by throngs when they are attacking some current evil and are almost deserted when they talk on prayer or spiritual cultivation.

But the test of our Christian temper and the hope of our social progress lie in our ability to kindle enthusiasm by love rather than by hate. Emil Ludwig, discussing the writing of biography, said that if an author is to make his subject live, he must "live with him, think with him, eat with him." "Unless you have a certain mad, furious, passionate relationship to your subject, you can never make him live in the minds of others." ² The Master Biographer of Nazareth so lived with his subjects that he has made a "Good Samaritan" and a repentant Prodigal Son live timelessly in the minds of men. And the subjects of Christ, who have lived with their Lord as did Saint Paul and Saint Francis, have made him live with kindling power. The lightning of anger can be changed into the radiance of love.

17. REMAKING DUTIES INTO DESIRES

IN our attitude toward duty we may be roughly divided into three groups. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that, with all of us, our duties fall into three classes, for common sense and experimental psychology remind us that general traits seldom cover the whole area of conduct in any individual. A person may be neat in one department of his living and slovenly in another. He may be scrupulously honest at some points and cut the corners at others. A business man may be the kindest of fathers and the most cruel of competitors. A man may observe a strict code of honor with men and be of easy virtue with women. Hence, our distinguishing lines of classification should run between duties rather than their doers.

One attitude toward duty is to dislike it and therefore refuse to do it. A second is to take it with distaste as part of life's necessary medicine. We "grin and bear it," but our smile is mirthless. Toward some of our duties we drag ourselves after the fashion of Shakespeare's

"Whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like a snail
Unwillingly to school."

How many of our so-called duties fall into these two categories may be seen by making a list of the things

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which we feel that we ought to do and then placing alongside a list of those things which we would like to do. And into which group do our religious activities fit? The church is an institution which we ought to attend and support, but do we like to do so?

What proportion of our duties do we find coinciding with our desires? That question measures our state of Christian grace and also the artistry and effectiveness of our living. Only when we enjoy doing the good deed, does our deed do much good. If the teacher does not enjoy her teaching, she is not likely to inspire her pupils. If the worshiper is on his knees unwillingly, he is not in the mood to appropriate the divine blessing. Nor does he commend his religious experience to others. It is the radiant religionists who make converts. Thus Tolstoi was led to Christianity. "I saw around me people who, having this faith, derived from it an idea of life that gave them strength to live and strength to die in peace and joy."

The enjoyment of duty is a trade-mark of genuine Christian experience. The Christian is a descendant from the Hebrew tradition in which the good man is he whose "delight is in the law of the Lord." The Christian is the follower of One who so loved his work that, when asked to eat, replied, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Jesus joined together in his gospel the Stoic interpretation of the good life as duty and the Epicurean conception of it as pleasure.

By the fourth century B.C., these two opposing philosophies confronted each other in Mediterranean thought. Stoicism insisted on obedience to duty. At

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its best, the Stoic philosophy was beautiful to behold when incarnate in a noble character like Epictetus, poised, unswerving, unshaken. At its worst, it was hard, angular, and self-conscious, without grace, charm, or generous human sympathy. Epicureanism at its best was a quiet and urbane enjoyment of life's permanent qualities of loveliness. At its worst, it was a surrender to all the lawless impulses of a gross and unbridled sensuality.

It was an epochal juncture in human history when apostolic Christianity brought to the cradle of Western civilization the message of the One who combined in his life the stern righteousness of Stoicism and the spontaneous enjoyment of Epicureanism; the One who heard the voice of conscience saying "I ought" and translated it into the voice of desire saying, "I love"; the One who "endured the cross" like a Stoic, yet for a "joy that was set before him," which would make pale in comparison the pleasures of the Epicurean.

Even as law and prophecy are blended and transcended in the gospel of Christ, so Stoicism and Epicureanism meet at their best in Christian experience. The moral passion of the former is saved and its hard emotionlessness softened; the frank hearty gladness of the latter is preserved and its vulgar tendencies supplemented by a passionate goodness which makes it impossible to enjoy evil things. Duty and enjoyment are wedded in the kind of life Christ came to give.

A study of the original lustrous masterpieces of Christian living reveals how poorly we have mixed the colors in our modern copies. Augustine Birrell said of the

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three Brontë sisters, reared in a rectory and stoutly regular in their churchmanship, that only one of them had sufficient religion to make it enjoyable. The average of one in three would hardly be maintained in a wider survey. Many there are who have just enough religious feeling to make them blush when they are doing wrong but not enough to make them glow when they do right, enough to give them an uncomfortable feeling when they do not go to church but not enough to give them pleasure when they do go.

When we seek the secret of that apostolic radiance which seems to have disappeared from our religious duties, we are impressed by the use which Jesus made of the will. The Master, with all his stressing of dependence on God, did not minimize the power of the human will. When he stood before certain cases of mental disorder, he is reported as saying to the evil spirits, "Come out of him." One wonders whether that injunction of Jesus might not have some kinship with our common expression, "Come out of it," addressed by way of rebuke to persons in certain moods; for it is possible by an act of will to jerk ourselves out of mental states, such as melancholia, plaintiveness, and inertia. The Great Physician used the will as the entering wedge for his work of healing. His peremptory prescription, "Follow me," was no more arbitrary than the treatment of any wise physician. "The doctor's orders" are an essential preliminary to his medicine. Unless a patient promises to follow the regimen, the physician cannot demonstrate his curative power.

The will can and must give that set to the soul so

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essential at the start of an undertaking. Jesus rebuked the negative attitude of the one who buried his talent in a napkin, saying, "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." Therein is stated the divine law of loss and accumulation. The negative distrusting type of mind in any situation finds every corner of the environment swarming with fears and anxieties to rob him of his strength and enthusiasm. On the other hand, a man with the will-to-believe finds the same situation crowded with elements of encouragement and invigoration. An envious cynical Dryden sits in his London coffeehouse noting the meanness and jealousies of men; another sits in the same room impressed with the comradeship and co-operation. A Sinclair Lewis sees the tawdry side of every modern Main Street; a William Dean Howells or a Bret Harte looked on muddier and uglier Main Streets of their day and beheld them as inviting places for the building of homes and the rearing of families. A critic with a will-to-disbelieve beholds the church today and sees its denominational divisions and petty parochialism; another observer, equally realistic, sees the new earnestness for social justice and the eagerness for church unity. It is the same church; the difference is in the mind of the observer.

This formative influence of the will was utilized by the Master at the starting point of discipleship. His sharp surgical commands in calling his followers from their preoccupations and previous interests were a necessary test of their mind-set.

Jesus also stressed the will to action in developing a

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desire for the duties which he at first peremptorily commanded. When he bade men to love their enemies, he knew that he was laying down a duty which no one finds enjoyable at first. Jesus accompanied that injunction with a formula; "Do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you." By following that formula a person finds himself learning to love his enemies.

Or consider that reported saying of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." When a minister prefaces a morning collection with those words of his Master, no spontaneous gleam of joy spreads over the faces of his congregation, for giving in the sacrificial Christian way is an acquired taste, not a natural one. And when he urges his people "to give until it hurts," he is setting a limit which enables many a worshiper to stop with his first quarter. The initial steps of giving are the most painful. But when a person forces himself to give past a certain point, then giving becomes pleasurable. Thus we learn to like the duties which at first seemed burdensome. And so it is with our other Christian obligations. When Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you," he knew it would seem galling at first to men with their coltish desires; but he added, "and learn of me," knowing that by keeping company with him we come to find the "yoke easy" and the "burden light." In the school of the Christ, as in the school of music, there is a point where we cross the divide and the uphill climb toward duty changes into the gravity of desire, and the effort to "get religion" is transformed into the state of grace in which religion "gets us."

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Among psychologists there is now a trend toward the recovery of this initiating power of the will. Doctor Henry C. Link in *The Return to Religion* asserts that the psychoanalytical emphasis is giving way to a growing appreciation of activity as the way to mental renewal. Instead of continued introspective self-examination to find out what he desires, man should force himself to do some things which he does not desire. In thus driving himself toward the undesirable, he enlarges the frontiers of the desirable, whereas he who does only what he likes, finds his range of liking growing less and less. In our over-stressing of self-analysis we have treated our minds like motor cars standing still with the lights turned on until the batteries have been weakened. We now see that by running we shall recharge the batteries and revive the lights.

His long experience as a consulting psychologist leads Doctor Link to advocate with evangelical fervor the revival of compulsory disciplines in home and school. And he is returning to the church, not because he likes what the institution has to offer, but primarily because he does not like many of its features. He believes that by doing what he dislikes, he is administering a wholesome discipline to his own soul.

This is a reason for church attendance and activity not recently accented. In our contemporary cult of comfort, the medicine of the soul has been sugar-coated to make it palatable to a generation which demands fresh vegetables in February and a principle of refrigeration in their picture of purgatory. Our church demands must be softened to match our upholstered pews. We

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have copied so much the methods of the market place in our efforts to secure patrons for our churches, that in catering to their wishes we have almost ceased to summon their wills. Whereas Jesus commanded, "Follow me," the churches are disposed to say, "Sit still and we shall bring it to you." And to those who will not exert themselves to come to the church to receive its offerings, a home delivery service has now been arranged by radio.

Our religious activities are geared to our casual feelings. We go to church when we feel like it. We read the Bible when we feel like it. We pray when we feel like it. Leaving our spiritual cultivation to the mercy of our likes and dislikes, we find the area of desired duties growing smaller and smaller. Truly "the Sabbath is made for man"; but we have misread that and adjusted the Lord's day to the mere comfort of man rather than to his whole welfare, with the result that we have devitalized the first day of the week into a time of lolling self-coddling which leaves the individual softer, more selfish, and far less spiritual. To be sure, church services are for the service of the worshipers, but the sons of men are able to appropriate those benefits only when, like the Son of Man, they come "not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Our ease-loving age must rediscover the apostolic truth that duties are changed into desires by doing. One main trouble with us is that the increase of our material resources has lessened our personal resourcefulness. Living in a world of specialists, we tend to become idle spectators of whatever is not our own line.

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Surrounded by machines and gadgets, we are disposed to press buttons to get things done rather than put pressure on our own initiating powers for doing them ourselves. The bad results of this are to be seen in both our secular and religious spheres.

Our recreations are so frequently not re-creative. With all the elaborate and extravagant paraphernalia provided for the entertainment of youth, there are probably not so many "merry whistled tunes" per capita as in the days of Whittier's barefoot boy, who with his few simple homemade devices had to put more of himself into his recreation. We adults work hard at our own specialties during the day, and then sit back in the evening while other specialists provide our amusements ready-made on stage or screen or air. Thus our imaginations grow flabby and our initiative loses its spring.

This passive spectatorship vitiates our civic life as well as our recreations. The visitor to Rome usually walks from the Forum to the Coliseum. The distance is only a few rods, but it marks a whole change of era in Roman life. The Forum was the place in which, during the vigorous days of the Republic, the citizens of Rome met to discuss their public questions and to formulate their programs. But in the later effete days of the empire, the professional politicians erected the Coliseum, in which they entertained with bread and circuses a citizenry which had become supine and servile. One wonders whether America may not be passing from the Forum stage to the Coliseum stage of her existence. Certainly it is so in the large cities and this fact ac-

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counts for the evil condition of machine politics prevailing in most of them.

Personal initiative and participation are necessary for the preservation of vital interest in any realm. The Protestant church must reawaken to this truth if it is to make good on its basic doctrine of the individual priesthood of believers. The Roman Catholic church may deal with its members en masse, but Protestantism works on the principle of intensive personal cultivation. This fact would seem to set a limit to the physical size of our parishes. It is doubtful whether any Protestant minister can adequately serve more than four or five hundred souls. Strong churches with a diversified ministerial staff may include several times that number, but the ratio of laity to clergy should not rise above that figure.

This necessary personal participation requires the enlargement of the democratic principle in parish government. Undoubtedly democracy is often less efficient than dictatorship. And Protestantism has lagged in strategy by leaving so much of its management to the laity, who bring to the business of the church only the left-over fragments of their time, thought, and energy. Nevertheless, lay leadership should be expanded rather than curtailed. The greatness of a preacher is shown not by what he gives to his people but by what he helps them to do for themselves. And long after the eloquence of brilliant pulpiteers is forgotten, the unspectacular cultivation of patient pastors continues to bear fruit.

The gospel principle of growth is from service to friendship. "No longer do I call you servants, but I

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have called you friends." By disciplined service in the doing of duty, the followers of Jesus rise to the status of friendship, where duty passes into desire and loyalties are held by love rather than by law. And let it be remembered, the friends of Jesus are made by personal cultivation and not by wholesale process.

18. RECALLING THE WITNESSES

THE word "witness" may be used in more than one sense. We may go to a courtroom, take a seat in the spectators' gallery, and observe the proceedings. We thus become witnesses of the trial. Yet up near the judge's bench and the jury box is a seat called the witness chair. That is reserved for those in turn who are to give testimony. Those who sit there are not merely witnesses of the trial; they are witnesses at the trial.

Jesus in the closing discourse as recorded by Luke is recounting certain events and issues of his earthly career, especially the experiences of his last days. Then he said to his disciples, "Ye are witnesses of these things." Up to that time they had been spectators at the trial of Jesus. To be exact, they had not been present in the courtroom where our Lord was being tried. On the night of his arrest they had all taken fright and fled. One of them, Peter, did follow afar off. Led on by love and yet held back by fear, he had trailed the captors of Jesus until he stood in the courtyard outside the high priest's house. Peter was near enough to his Master that night to hear and see what was going on. He was a witness of the trial of Jesus.

Contrast this appearance of Peter with that a few weeks later when he is brought to this same priestly court to answer the charge of disturbing the peace by his preaching and healing. The record as given in the

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fourth chapter of Acts reveals the apostle as no cringing, shivering, timid onlooker. From a silent spectator frightened by a serving maid's accusation, Peter has been transformed into a vigorous eloquent spokesman whose "boldness" impresses the persons present. He who had been a witness of the trial of Jesus has now become a witness at the trial of Jesus.

As Peter was changed so were the others. After the terrifying darkness of the crucifixion season the sun of a new hope had risen. The Christ had made himself felt as a living force in Jerusalem after the Jews and Romans had thought that they had buried him and his movement. The dismayed disciples had taken fresh heart. They raised their voices to talk about him. They preached "repentance and remission of sins in his name," and the results were amazing.

This transformation has been pictured forth in symbolism on the gateway of a cathedral. John Ruskin in his *Bible of Amiens* tells us of the twelve statues of the apostles there. In the case of each the sculpture is in two parts, representing the apostle's leading virtue in contrast with his kindred weakness. Thus in the case of Peter the great quality is courage. On the top panel is seen a man fleeing from a tiger—a picture of Peter's cowardice on the night of his arrest. On the panel below is seen the same man riding on the very tiger from which before he had fled. Thus were the comrades of the Christ changed from fearsome silent witnesses of Jesus' trial into potent courageous witnesses at his trial.

In a true sense, the trial of Jesus, be it remembered,

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did not end when Pilate gave sentence. It went on after the crucifixion. In fact, the most important part of the proceedings was after Calvary. Christ was far more concerned with what would happen to the body of his teaching than with what happened to the body of his person. What he had done and said, the things for which he had stood, the revelation which he had made—these must not be condemned to the death of oblivion. The courtroom of the living Christ is eternally open. His case is in progress wherever principles are being challenged. His trial is on now.

And what is the present situation in the case of the World versus the Christ? The spectator's gallery is full. More people are interested in watching the outcome than ever before. Almost all persons who lay any claim to culture take some interest in the subject of Jesus. The counsel table, too, might be said to be pretty well surrounded. The trained technicians of Christian apologetics are by no means too numerous. More preachers, certainly more good preachers, are needed. They are the necessary legal staff who must present the arguments of Christianity. But with all our need of good pulpit advocates, the most pressing demand today in the trial of Jesus is for witnesses to give evidence. Our churches seem to have far more ability for arguing about Christ than for telling what he is doing for them. The early Christians were simple witnesses giving testimony of what they had seen and felt and heard. Christianity began as news; it has with so many deteriorated into mere advice. The early church began as a lay movement and it loses its dynamic when-

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ever and wherever the professionalization of activities leaves the laity passive.

Just as our colleges are now seeking to have all students participate in athletics rather than to have them mere side-line witnesses of specialized teams, so our churches must cultivate more individual lay participation and less passive observing of pulpit efforts. There must, of course, be technically trained teachers and workers in the religious field, for ours is an age of specialized skill in all realms; but a whole regiment of Beechers and Brookses, if we had them, could not be an adequate substitute for personal testimony.

The religious movement which has grown the most rapidly in the last twenty-five years is not the one which has had the best preachers, but the one which has had little preaching at all. The laity did the talking. The secret of the growth of Christian Science lies not so much in what a certain woman said some fifty years ago, but in what women and men in that movement have been saying ever since. And the more recent Oxford Groups make much of "sharing" their experiences, for they know that an ounce of personal news is equal to a ton of professional advice. Witnesses who give evidence are worth far more to any cause than pulpit lawyers who make argument.

A crucial need in the trial of Christ today is for laymen to move from the spectators' gallery to the witness chair. There are certain forms of silent witnessing today which are working infinite harm to the cause of Christ.

In the first place, there is the silence of the ignorant.

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A writer of distinction took a trip recently through the Mediterranean countries. He had been trained in his youth for the priesthood. Various observations and experiences, however, had led him to the belief that Christianity had wholly lost touch with Christ. He became an avowed skeptic in religion. After his visit he confessed that the sight of certain Christian relief work being done in the Near East struck him with the force of a new discovery. He was surprised to find that some people were taking the principles of Christ seriously. The reason for his surprise was that he had been ignorant of the many similar works of love and mercy going on in our own country and in the mission fields. Reading the secular press, which plays up the defects of the churches and the sins of churchmen, and balancing this stream of suggestion by no news of the redemptive programs now in progress, a person finds his religious enthusiasm rapidly departing. It is much as if a candidate for office were to read only the speeches and editorials of the opposing side. Hearing so steadily about sectarian divisiveness, the public does not know what earnest efforts are being made toward denominational co-operation and church unity. Listening to the conversational requiems played over the "dead" country churches, one comes to forget that even in the most petty little parish there are some saintly souls still being nurtured.

There is also the silence of the ungrateful. On one occasion our Lord was accosted by ten lepers pleading for his healing touch. When the priceless boon of health had been graciously given, only one came back

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to thank him. We can almost hear the heartbreak in Jesus' voice as he asks, "Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine? Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?" Various causes may have conspired to prevent their return. But we may be sure that some remained absent and silent from sheer ingratitude. Out of every ten persons helped there are bound to be some ungrateful ones. Physicians know this. Social workers know it almost to their despair. Plenty of people there are who pick up the benefits of our Christian institutions and spend them carelessly as a tramp picks up the chance coin lost upon the street with no gratitude to the one who earned it and no sense of honorable obligation for its use. Christianity has begotten a brood of spoiled children who receive its benefits but render no thanks. Theirs is the ugly and inexcusable silence of ingratitude.

A third group which does not take the witness chair for Christ is that of the dutiful but dumb. These persons are conscious of the benefits which they have received through Christ and his institutions. But they believe that the only necessary way of showing gratitude is by doing their work honestly and living their lives honorably. Hence they make no public acknowledgment of their debt to Christ. They utter no words of praise. They give themselves to no open forms of worship.

With their point of view one can feel considerable sympathy. Conduct is more important than speech. Words without works are as sounding brass and tinkling

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cymbal. On the other hand, however, works without words can subtly lose the music of their doing. Many a home has lost its melody and romance and love because husband and wife worked for each other, but neglected the words and expressions of affection. Love between man and woman or between friend and friend cannot remain vigorous long in silence. Human love that is dumb soon grows deaf, even blind.

So is it between man and God. When we serve him in silence and solitude we find the temperature of our affection growing cooler. A Scotch minister once drove this truth home in vivid fashion when calling upon a man who had ceased his church attendance. Without comment or argument the pastor lifted a blazing coal from the grate and laid it upon the hearthstone. Together they watched it die down from a white heat to a sullen redness and then to an ashen paleness. The solitary and silent servant of God has not been proved a success by the testimony of history. Social contact and vocal expression are essential to warm and vital religion. There is a logic of the soul behind "the appointed means of grace, such as the public and private worship of God." When we try to phrase our gratitude for God's blessings we unconsciously begin to make an inventory of divine favors. We rummage among our negligences. We discover unlabeled gifts which we have received. Our sense of indebtedness wells up within us. Our words of praise become wings which lift us Godward. "Silence is golden," says an old maxim. But silence when continued too far can become leaden in the life of the spirit.

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A fourth class of silent witnesses are the patrons of Christianity. They recognize the service of religion to the weak, the wayward, the bereft, the distraught. They give of their substance to support churches for the stabilizing of society. But they feel no need of its boons for themselves. They treat the church in patronizing fashion as an agency for the less fortunate. Our communities all contain persons of this type who hold aloof from active participation in the life of the local churches.

Such an attitude defeats its own end. The alert lads of a town soon acquire the feeling that if the church is not big enough to enlist the leading men, it is not big enough for themselves. Money given to church by men who themselves acknowledge no need of its services fails of its purpose. There is not redemption in mere patronage. In its annual report some years ago, the Rockefeller Foundation expressed its desire to be "a partner, not a patron," in all its foreign enterprises. Such must be the aim of the strong men of a community. They must enter into religious partnership with rich and poor, young and old, humbly acknowledging by their presence and participation that they too have need of what Christ came to bring. These Protestant Patron Saints must descend from their pedestals whence they hand down wealth for weaker persons and become fellow-workers in the common enterprises of Christ's Kingdom. The witness chair at the trial of Christ is waiting for these, and the eloquence of their action would have immeasurable force.

The world needs no noisy religion. Nor is it profited

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by an outpouring of personal experiences so lurid that they focus attention on the sins committed rather than on their redemption. This is one of the perils which beset rescue missions and group "sharing." There is a temptation of exhibitionism to which even the pious are prone. The coloring of one's actual experience in order to make it interesting to others, the enhancement of details as the testimony is repeated—these are evils against which witnesses for Christ must guard. Some modern publicized confessions are as undesirable as some of the stereotyped testimonies of the old-fashioned prayer meetings were deadly.

Men of taste are repelled by those who talk too easily and glibly about their personal religion. Jesus, the gentleman, liked persons of reserve and rebuked the emptiness of words without works. But what Christianity does need is the translation of the apostolic ways of witnessing into twentieth-century terms concrete enough to be convincing and plain enough to be appealing. If the disciples of Christ were to express their religious experiences in the same simple straightforward language in which they discuss their business, we should bring to religion that quickening of pulse which is so marked in the market place.

19. REDISCOVERING THE GATES OF GOD

FROM Homer down to John Bunyan and John Masefield, the pilgrimage of life has been symbolized as a road. And on this road there are points at which we seem to cross a threshold from one stage of the journey to another. These gates are a part of God's maintenance of life's highway. They form the milestones by which we measure our progress. The passing of them provides the red-letter days which shed their radiance before and after. Through them we enter those experiences in which

"One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name."

In that greatest guidebook of the road, the Bible, there are at least four gates which figure in the recovery of religious radiance.

The first is the closed gate behind us. In the Genesis account of the birth of conscience, we are told that when the first travelers on life's journey had been banished from Eden, God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." That is the early figurative way of stating an eternal fact of life. When a person has passed through a great experience, he cannot turn and re-enter it precisely as before.

When, for instance, a man has sinned away his boyish

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innocence, he cannot get back into that garden of childhood and see life just as it was. The gate is closed. When a child comes into a home and then departs through the doorway of death, other children may come later but there is none which can quite take the place of the one that is gone. That gate is closed.

When two people enter upon the adventure of marriage it is always somewhat of an experiment—an experiment in which even the best of us sometimes make mistakes. But if that beginning of the home fails, its collapse is not quite like the failure of an experiment in the laboratory of a factory. In the latter, when an explosion occurs, we can clear away the debris and start over again just as before. But in the laboratory of love, the results of mistakes are not so easily removed. We may be divorced and remarried, but something has happened which makes it impossible to recapture the original attitudes. The gate is closed.

Or when a nation goes through a war, it may cry, "Back to Normalcy," as we Americans did in the 1920's; but there was no getting back to pre-war conditions. The murdering of millions of men and the killing of human ideals closed the gate. Or when a country goes through a period of social change such as we have been experiencing in the 1930's, we may call our efforts a National Recovery Program. But if we mean by "recovery" getting back to the conditions of 1929, we may as well save our futile struggles. No nation can go through the experiences of the last six years and come out where it started. The gate is closed.

We can repeal laws, but we cannot repeal life. We

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can retrace our steps, but we cannot relive our old experiences. We can revisit old scenes, but we cannot reproduce the original impressions. And so we might spend our time in doleful mood, dwelling on our past Edens whose gates are now closed. So many people do just that.

On second thought, however, this closing of the gate behind us reveals itself as more of a blessing than a curse. A friend was one day playing golf with Mr. Lloyd George. After their round they were returning through a field in which some cattle were grazing. So eager was the companion to catch the words which fell from Mr. Lloyd George's lips that he failed to close the gate through which they had just passed. Whereupon the statesman himself turned and latched it. As they resumed their walk, the former premier asked his friend if he had known a certain fine old doctor of the neighborhood who had just died. Then he told of the clergyman who went to see the doctor on his deathbed and asked him if he had any message which he would like to give his friends. "No," answered the old man. "I guess not, except that you might tell them that through life I think I have always closed the gates behind me."

That closing of the gate behind him was one secret of the man's serenity and efficiency. The man of action closes the door of his mind on the yelping pack of yesterday's hounding worries and regrets. He weighs the evidence, balances the issues, reaches a decision—then dismisses the matter. As one successful man put it, "When I have closed the door, I have closed the door."

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This is the plain and practical rule of efficiency which Jesus tried to enforce. When a would-be follower said he wished to come with Christ, but first asked the privilege of going back to bid farewell to those at home, Jesus said: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." And to another who begged leave to go back and bury his father, Jesus said: "Let the dead bury their dead." This was Jesus' short, sharp, surgical way of saying: "Close the gate behind you."

Moreover, the value of this closed gate behind becomes more apparent when we consider that, while it does keep us from recapturing our past, it also prevents our past from recapturing us. We remember the Old Testament account of Israel's escape from Egypt. The record says that a pillar of cloud and fire came behind the camp of the Israelites to hinder the pursuing Egyptians. It is again the picturesque oriental way of saying that God protected the Israelites by closing the road of pursuit from behind. That is a service needed as much today as three thousand years ago. The Egyptians of our yesterdays must not overtake us. We may regret that we cannot re-enter our Edens; but we can rejoice that our Egypts cannot recapture us.

There leaps into memory a man who, twenty-five years ago, was in bondage to the gambling habit. For fifteen or more years now he has been an honored worker in the religious field, rendering distinguished service and living happily on his modest salary. To be sure, the gate is closed on some of the gardens of opportunity which he lost in those gambling years. But also

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it is true, that the old passion for the gaming table is gone. Its power over him is broken. How was it done? By something which came into his life through religion. In a religious meeting he made contact with the Christ who "breaks the power of canceled sin," who "sets the prisoner free."

Instead of remorse which is a pining for the "good old days," let us have repentance, which is a turning from the bad old days. As individuals and as a nation, let us cease looking at those lost blessings of our previous prosperous era and let us pray that the old curses of our so-called prosperity may not overtake us again. "Forgetting the things that are behind, I press on." That was the motto of a mighty man who knew the divine secret of closing the gate behind him.

A survey of contemporary preaching reveals a neglect of the doctrine of divine forgiveness. Our pulpit messages stress the forward-looking elements of religion, such as faith and hope. But the doctrines of repentance and forgiveness seem to have dropped out of the limelight. This is a fatal omission. The headlight of the engine throwing its path of light along the track ahead is no more important than the faithful flagman with his torch to prevent collision from the rear. We must stress this twofold service of God, for control of the past is an essential to the preparation for the future. Otherwise life is merely an adding of new resolutions to old regrets. A new birth emerges from an old death through the begetting power of a Father's forgiving love.

The Book of the Road shows us a second gate. We hear the Galilean Master of the Road say: "Narrow is

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the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."

The surface truth of these words is as plain and practical as that of the closed gate. Jesus was saying what we all know—that the road to excellence in any area of life passes through narrow openings. The college youth who wants the full zest of sport on the athletic field must pass through the rigid routine of the training squad and the selected diet of the training table. His fraternity brothers in the clubhouse may be enjoying the broad and easy road of midnight suppers and intemperate indulgence, but he undergoes his restrictions. His is the narrow gate, not of asceticism but of athleticism. The lawyer, who heads his office and is now on what we call "easy street," can recall the needle's eye of apprenticeship through which he had to pass in the strenuous preparation for his professional skill. Or turning to the realm of art, Ponselle, Pons, and Flagstadt, who now are at the peak of the musical world, had to climb to that position by rigorous discipline which many another perhaps equally gifted person refused and thereby remained among the mediocrities.

So also in the spiritual and religious realm. That person whose goodness is so genuine, whose godliness is so real that he resists temptation with immunity and carries his virtues with easy grace—that person most probably attained his state of character by a self-discipline to which the rest of us are strangers. And the necessity of this narrow gate on the road to God is a note which recent preaching has been disposed to silence. The fear of narrowness has become almost a

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fetish. We have very rightly repudiated old rigidities of doctrine and provincialism of outlook. Yet in reacting from a blue-nosed Puritanism we have verged too far toward a red-nosed libertinism. In freeing ourselves from the old-fashioned idea that the religious life was to be lived in a strait-jacket of rules, we have become flabby with our elastic moral codes. Recognizing that the Master laid down principles rather than rules, we must see that to live by the principles of love is more exacting than to follow the rules of law. When Jesus elevated his disciples from the status of "servants" to "friends," he did not relax their requirements, but raised them, for with a friend "the sky is the limit" of effort to meet obligation.

It may be that the road back from our easygoing morals is by way of a return to emphasis on rules. A century ago, in a social situation somewhat parallel to ours, England saw a revival of the monastic life within its Established Church. Unless there is a general tightening up of regulations throughout the Church, we may expect to see an increasing number separate themselves from conventional parish life into these ascetic ventures.

And if we lift our gaze to the social scale, we see how aptly this principle of the narrow gate applies to our whole national life. During the booming 1920's we dashed ahead like motorists driving abreast at break-neck speed along a broad highway. Then in 1929 we came to a bottleneck in the road and traffic became tied up, while everybody honked and hooted and nobody seemed willing to give the other right of way. Now that business has begun to move again, have we learned

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the divine rules of the road? Are we going to give personality the right of way over possessions, quality over quantity, the spiritual over the material? Or are we to be motivated by greed and speed, each trying to get by with so much that eventually society cannot get by, and we have another panic? Remember, we can pass laws and sometimes get by them. We can take chances and sometimes get by. But sooner or later we come to a gate which we cannot get by, for "narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."

The Guidebook of the Road sets before us a third gate. It is that of the divine entrance: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man open unto me, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." The New Testament teaching is that religion is a two-way search between man and God. But one influence of science upon religion has been to emphasize man's searching and to overlook God's. We can have a heart-warming religious faith only as we feel that a Heavenly Father is seeking for us. Some years ago a twelve-year-old lad was thrown from his horse several miles from home. Night was settling as the frightened animal dashed away leaving a still more frightened boy to pick himself up out of the snow. He headed for home, feeling sore in body, but a bit proud in spirit that he was manly enough to make his way through such difficulties. Mingled with it all, however, was another feeling, a confidence that after a while his father would be coming out to look for him. And when a few hours later the father did find him, there was a warming sense

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of gratitude and comfort far transcending the pride which he might have felt had he reached home by himself. The thought of God as seeking us transforms religious faith from a cold search to a radiant homecoming.

And this door of divine entrance does other things for our religious experience. It is the opening which lets the largeness and freshness of the heavenly into the littleness and staleness of our human situations. How often it happens that we get shut into ourselves and breathe over our fears and anxieties and suspicions until our minds become like closed cars whose windows are filmed with the breath of the occupants. The cure for such a condition is to let in the air. This is a point at which worship shows its superiority over mere meditation. Introspection so often locks us into ourselves; adoration lets God in and thereby lets us out of our self-imprisonment. When Jesus gave his model prayer, he did not teach us to begin with self-analysis or petition, not with "forgive us our trespasses," or "give us this day our daily bread." The Lord's Prayer starts with a mental sweep which opens the windows of the soul, "Our Father which art in heaven." It is like the stretching intake of breath before beginning our setting-up exercises.

Or this divine entrance into life may be likened to the opening of the draft on a smoldering fire. Muriel Lester, head of a great London settlement house, who has been touring the United States as a member of the National Preaching Mission, gives the formula by which she maintains her radiant enthusiasm amid the drabness

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and degeneracy of the slum district wherein she works. In brief it is this: When she awakes in the morning, she greets God, not with a petition, but with praise—praise for the new day and the health to face it. Before breakfast she dedicates the day to God's larger purposes. At meals she lifts her thoughts to the grace of God, the great Giver. In the car on her way to work, she reminds herself that the crowd is a company of God's children. Before she goes to sleep at night, she lets the day's events filter through her mind, straining out the evil and committing the rest to the keeping of the Heavenly Father. Thus Muriel Lester draws the drafts of divine inspiration which maintain the glow of her enthusiastic living.

This Biblical guidebook, which opens with a gate closed behind us, closes with a gate opening in front of us. In the third chapter of Revelation, the Divine Voice is interpreted as saying, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

When a person by repentance has turned from the closed gate behind him and has passed through the strait and narrow gate under the guidance of the rules laid down in the Bible, then he does find the doors opening ahead of him. That is the promise of this Book of the Road. Is it true?

There is much that seems to belie the treatment. Faithful pilgrims who have followed the teachings of their God often seem to find their paths blocked by obstacles. But we are not to be deceived by hasty observations. Take the longer views.

Dante is driven from his beloved Florence, the gates

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are closed against him, and they say Dante is done for. But the day comes when the name of Dante becomes the chief glory of his native city. Paul is imprisoned in a dirty dungeon under the brow of a hill in the imperial city of Rome. Observers would have said Paul is done for. But centuries pass and Sir Christopher Wren crowns London, a far greater city than Rome, with a cathedral called St. Paul's. The doors of the world do open for men like Paul. When a man gives himself to a great cause in line with Christ's principles, therein so far forgetting himself that he is indifferent to personal injury, he becomes invincible because he becomes invulnerable. There is no vanity in him to be wounded. There is no self-interest in him by which he can be frightened. "Perfect love casteth out fear." He goes through.

There is some element in the soil of human society whereby "truth crushed to earth shall rise again." Time is on the side of the true. The universe seems to underwrite Christ's kind of love. The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over their subjects while the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Yet when the Caesars have overplayed their hands and thereby bred the opposition which overthrows them, the Christ-like servants widen their sway over the hearts of men. In this sense, "the meek do inherit the earth." The servants do become the greatest. The Marconis outlive the Mussolinis. Dictators have their day, but Christ has the future. "This is the victory that overcometh the world."

Reinhold Niebuhr, with his reputation for pessimistic

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realism, is reported as challenging the easy optimists with the statement that if they would be pessimistic with him decade by decade he would be optimistic with them aeon by aeon. The decades have their deteriorations. Progress is not unbroken nor inevitable through the generations. But the testimony of the ages supports the faith that in the door of the universe there is a divine eye, which, like the "electric eye" recently invented, opens the door for those who follow in the Jesus way of life.

The faithful who follow this way to the limit do not feel that God has led them into a blind alley. The persons who would seem to have the most reason to doubt the goodness of God are those who believe most firmly in it. At the end of their days, they stand like houses lighted up at eventide. Their radiance streams forth to make paths for others through the surrounding darkness.

Theirs is a hope not dimmed by death. They are confident that they cannot drift beyond the love and care which they have tested on this side of the grave. Professor John Baillie recounts the experience of a physician who was calling on a patient in his last illness. Conversation turned on the hereafter. The sick man expressed his faith in a future life, but asked what it would be like. The doctor was at a momentary loss for words, when suddenly he heard a scratching at the door. It was his dog which had followed him to the call. The animal's attitude gave him an inspiration. "Do you hear that?" he asked his patient. "That is my dog. I left him downstairs, but he grew impatient

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and has come up and hears my voice. He has no notion what is inside that door, but he knows I am here. Now, is it not the same with you? You do not know what lies beyond the Door, but you know your Master is there.”¹ The “living hope” of finding the Master behind earth’s last door lights the Christian’s way at the end.

IV. THE RECOVERY OF POWER

20. From High Power to "Power from on High"
21. From the Within to the Beyond
22. From Magic to Mastery
23. From the Church to Her Children—and Back
24. From Scapegoat to Saviour

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20. FROM HIGH POWER TO "POWER FROM ON HIGH"

 OURS is a power-loving era. We live and move and have our being in an atmosphere electric with energy. Our major mechanical inventions are still sufficiently new to intoxicate us with their novelty. Measured in cosmic time, the steam engine has been here only a few minutes, the motor car was delivered a moment ago, and the airliner has just this second flashed into view. Speed is not only king but dictator, and dynamos, Diesel engines, streamlined trains, and Boulder Dams are among his leading subjects.

The possession of power is the popular yardstick of success. We admire the business executive for his long-range control of large corporations, and he in turn cherishes a secret admiration for the chin and achievements of a Mussolini. Despite our denunciation of dictators and our lauding of democracy, we Americans are eager to present our daughters at courts of royalty, and we prefer the monarch who is "every inch a king." The schoolboys' heroes are the masterful men. According to Dr. Alfred Adler, widely read psychologist, the one dominating impulse ruling personal conduct from early

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childhood to the end of the road is the love of power—that is, the power to dominate others.

This power motif has been taken over into the religious realm. In hope of fitting the modern patterns of success, Jesus of Nazareth has been lifted from the frame of suffering servant and presented as an efficiency expert, whose principles promote business. The man on the street looks with pity, if not with contempt, on the poor parish clergy whose meager salaries stamp them as social failures, but he looks up to “the princes of the church”—a title which in itself reveals how far the Gentile principle of lordship has permeated the ranks of the lowly Nazarene.

A question commonly asked is, would Jesus feel at home if he were to return to the vaulted domes and vaulting hierarchies erected in his name? The guess is in the negative. But if the question be asked whether the present-day American “Christian” would feel at home amid the living conditions of our Lord’s time, the answer is no guess; it is a certain negative. To be transplanted to first-century Palestine minus our motors, our hospitals, our telephones, our radios, our labor-saving machines—this would be to us a stroke of paralysis. The stagnation of it would seem intolerable. The writer recalls hearing a local real estate dealer in a Nazareth hotel relating how many of the Zionist repatriates could not endure the change from the throbbing cities of Europe and America to the sleepy quietude of Galilee.

But when we turn from the high-powered cities of our Western world to the New Testament, we feel a

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power pulsing through those pages which makes us wonder at what we are missing. If the minister of a modern congregation were to repeat his Lord's injunction, "Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high," it is probable that the majority present would not know when to leave. Geared to a mechanized world, we have become less sensitized to spiritual contacts. We who fret at the delay of a trolley are too impatient to wait upon the Lord until we feel the renewing of our strength. We who depend on committee actions for the promotion of our religious programs can hardly comprehend the Acts of the Apostles.

When we contrast the "boldness of Peter and John" with the tame proceedings of conventional parishes, we recall the recent description of an English clergyman as "a docile and mild-mannered gentleman trying to persuade a docile company of people to be still more docile." To be sure, such a caricature does not fit the typical American minister, whose manifold activities and hurried movements make one think of a motorist trying to start his car, pushing the accelerator and pulling the gadgets—but still the engine remains cold. When we compare the catacombs with our cathedrals, the collections of Paul with our growing denominational budgets, the meager materials of the early church with our vast ecclesiastical equipment, we are humiliated by our pitiful showing of spiritual power.

We have shifted our power development from the inner centers of life to the external circumference, from the moral controls to the mechanical tools. During the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago, one observer

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was thrilled as he stood in the Hall of Transportation and gazed at the line of conveyances leading from the horse-carriage to the airliner, all developed within a brief hundred years. But on the day of his visit he had in his pocket a metropolitan newspaper which carried three major headlines: one dealing with the charge that they were "scrapping" the Chicago school system under the exigencies of the business depression; a second with the orgy of speculation in Wall Street, which for a brief time repeated the old evils of 1929; and a third with that most heinous form of gangsterism, the crime of kidnapping. As the visitor looked at the improved means of travel and then at the ominous headlines, he came to the simple conclusion that we have made more progress in the speeding of our machines than in the strengthening of the characters which control them.

The faster we go, the farther ahead we need to look and the sturdier the controls we need in order to avoid disaster. Our long-range corporate era has given new forms to old temptations and our machine age has provided better tools and techniques for old sins. The subtlety of temptation has outrun the sensitivity of conscience. If we are to master the menacing horse-power with our man-power, we must bring our moral vision abreast of the advancing frontiers of evil. More than that, we must implement the codes of Sinai and the Sermon on the Mount with a power of arrest and seizure adequate to the concealments of a crowded complex society.

Consider, for example, the simple old command,

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"Thou shalt not steal." It is one thing to be honest enough to keep straight in the man-to-man dealings of a village store or a blacksmith shop; it is quite another to have an integrity able to resist the subtle temptations of the directors' room or the stock market. A few years ago a speaker threw some shafts of criticism at a public utilities magnate then under indictment. At the close of his address, a woman came to him and expressed her displeasure at his remarks, saying that she was a neighbor of the man in question and that she knew him to be a kindly, gentle person unwilling to harm anyone. The woman's observation was well taken. No doubt, the man did possess a kind nature, loath to injure any individual he knew and saw. But we live in a society where one can rob so many people whom he cannot see and know. He can be dishonest and be so damnably respectable about it.

Or take the code of truth-telling. That must be enlarged from the simple category of personal veracity to the new settings of business promotion and high-pressure propaganda. The gentleman's honor of standing by his work is, of course, to be preserved, but he should also find out the facts to make his word worth standing by. And finding out the facts is a difficult job in a day when ninety per cent of the news in the daily press is said to be colored by special interests. If we are to dispel the fog of fictions in the popular mind, we must bring out into the open the sources behind the news. We must stave off the censorships, both political and financial, which threaten to throttle the freedom of press, pulpit, and schoolroom. It is child's play to prate about

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the personal virtue of keeping one's word and then allow millions to be led to deception and death by false words.

And as for the old moral code against killing, how is that to be kept up to date? The warmakers are improving the techniques of taking life. They have improved their methods from guns to germs, from firebrands to poison gas; they have enlarged battle fronts until they now take in the back yards of the women and children at home. The supreme moral challenge of our time is to overtake the science of killing with the power of saving.

"We must wage peace as men have waged war." To do that involves taking over into the peace movement the slogan words hitherto monopolized by the warmakers. Of these, the first is "patriotism," a term which turns the mind at once to thoughts of force. Patriotic societies, patriotic celebrations, patriotic service have all been so colored by war connections that they take on a military tinge in the popular mind. The task now is to make the concept of patriotism colorful and challenging for peace purposes, to play up the scientists and social servants before the minds of youth until they are seen as the most valuable patriots. This can be done by education, but it requires far more concerted effort and intelligence on the part of church and school than now exist.

"Preparedness" is another word heretofore kept in the camp of the militarists. It suggests at once armed defense. Despite the evidence that armaments lead to war rather than to peace, despite the folly of piling up equipment which ten years hence will be obsolete, the

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mad race goes on. Survivors, not yet recovered from past struggles, remain blind followers of empty slogans. Can we arouse the public to see the truth about preparedness? The stirring of interest gives promise. The peace sentiment is emerging from the sentimental stage and entering the serious study of economic causes and political preventives. People are coming to see that certain powerful nations are the "haves," while others are the "have-nots," and inequities cannot be permanently partitioned any more effectively than the Gulf Stream can be fenced off. Men begin to distinguish between territories and markets, between the war system and international police force exercised in a nonpartisan judicial spirit. The truth dawns that "the richest nations tomorrow will not be the ones with the farthest scattered empires to defend. They will be those countries with the greatest scientists, the most brains, the most skillful populations, and the most efficient social organization."¹

Still another slogan word to be taken over from the warmakers to the peacemakers is the term "enlistment." When we speak of enlisting in the nation's service we think of military or naval duty. It is only war service which gives the stamp of hero to the governmental servant or the stigma of slacker to the evader. During the war the sense of enlistment was carried down to the last citizen until it touched every thrift stamp bought and every pound of sugar saved. Unless something of the same spirit can be generated for peace causes, we shall go on having wars. The youth of Germany and Italy have been fired with a zeal which glows in their faces.

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Free democracies must find an equivalent fervor or they will go the way of dictators.

It is not within the scope of this brief chapter to map a campaign for peace or truth or honesty or any other virtue which now faces the new frontiers of application. These glimpses, however, should serve to show the task too great for merely human resources.

"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing."

The paths of progress are blocked by tired liberals; the visions of ideals are clouded by peacemakers turned pessimists. The current mood is one of defeatism. Some social prophets of yesterday have abandoned hope in the leavening power of love and look now to coercion and violence. Others in Barthian fashion are resting their hope in divine intervention. Still others, combining something of both emphases, admit themselves to be leaning economically to the left and theologically to the right. And all have repudiated the roseate liberalism of yesterday.

The religious forces of our Western world are at the crossroads. Shall they take the secular way and go with those groups which seek the improved ends of peace and justice by the unimproved means of violence and class struggle? Or shall they go with the Barthians looking for the lightning of divine intervention to clear the air and strike down the evils? Or will they harness the lightning and transform it with the light and power "from on high"? The "dunamis" (power) of God can be a dynamo as well as dynamite.

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In religion rests the chief hope of our social reforms and peace programs. By playing the mind of the Christ, week after week, on private virtues and public issues, the Church keeps the insights illumined and the points of application sharpened. By linking our human desires and resources with the purpose and power of God, it fires our efforts with religious fervor, reinforces our hopes, and releases those energies of the spirit, which lie too deep for secular summons. If true to its function, the Church brings the power from within to safeguard and sustain the high-powered forces without and then supplements both by the power from beyond.

21. FROM THE WITHIN TO THE BEYOND

TO each one of us the most interesting word in the language is his own name. Such is the recent assertion of a popular success-psychologist. This is only a vivid way of saying that we are all very much interested in ourselves. We need not deny the fact nor apologize for it. Jesus founded his social philosophy on the basic assumption of man's self-concern. When he took over from Leviticus the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," he did not alter it to read, "Thou shalt love they neighbor instead of thyself."

Moreover, we are interested in ourselves partly because we are ever surprising ourselves. Sweet sixteen is a period of wonder when the "trailing clouds of glory" which usher in the child are clearing before the not yet common day and every bush is aflame with some new touch of heaven. Yet when sixteen ripens into the sixties, the wonder grows that one small head could carry so much more than it knows. The world without may have dimmed its lights of surprise, but the world within flashes with more and more hints of its beyonds.

When the mind has reached wit's end, a saving wisdom sometimes illumines the path. When human strength has come to "the end of its string," a new supply of power wells in from somewhere, and a person walks out of a situation after a demonstration of en-

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duration amazing to himself, saying, "I did not know it was in me." After an air raid over Paris in 1915, a paralyzed woman living on the fifth floor of an apartment found herself in the porter's lodge on the ground floor. Emergencies evoke unguessed energies.

Or it may be that the surprise comes from the deep inner abysses of darkness into which we sometimes get glimpses. After a crime of passion the wrongdoer looks at the wreckage left by his deed and cries, "How could I have done that?" Having done that which he would not, a person feels with Paul, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Strange demonic powers take possession of us; mysterious possibilities of sinfulness are revealed within us. As William James said, "Most of us do not live within sight of our limitations"; but every now and then we are pushed out to the frontiers of our routine living and we catch hints of the heights and depths and reaches of life.

While these intimations of the beyond within have beckoned men to explore their minds since the dawn of self-consciousness, the developing techniques of our day have given a new impetus to the search. When Socrates gave his counsel, "Know thyself," the technical aid which he could offer to his protégés lacked the laboratory findings of the modern psychologist somewhat as the Greek chariot was minus the equipment of the motor trailer. And Alexander Pope's prim prudential injunction, "The proper study of mankind is man," seems as far behind Alexis Carrel's impassioned and implemented program in *Man the Unknown* as the surgery

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of the eighteenth century is behind that of the Rockefeller Institute.

The rough generalization might be made that the nineteenth century put its emphasis on the exploring of nature, while the twentieth century so far has been focusing its major emphasis on the exploring of human nature. To be sure, geographical exploration and the physical sciences go on, but psychological and social studies are more and more catching the popular attention. Our American pioneers turned toward the external frontiers which intrigued them with the promises of wealth and power. They cleared the wilderness, laid the roads, built the cities. Now with a frontierless continent, our generation is looking within to the imperial possibilities of personality. Our grandfathers devoured books on the winning of the west; our current best sellers tell us how "to win friends and influence people."

The vogue of the day among individuals is the psychology of personal success. Among our social seers some—although not many as yet—are coming to recognize with Dorothy Thompson that "the new worlds to conquer are not horizontal, they are vertical. They are in men's minds."¹

In the conquest of these inner worlds, man has developed several rather recent advances in self-help. Sixty-two years ago Mary Baker Eddy published her *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. However confused the philosophy and exorbitant the claims, that book ushered in a study of the power of mind over matter, which makes even the thoughtful critics of the movement loath to set limits to the possibilities of spir-

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itual healing. Christian Science has served to spread beyond its own boundaries a new interest in the diet of the mind.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Sigmund Freud opened up to insistent study the cavernous depths of the Unconscious. Digging down through our dreams and hysteria, he uncovered that region below the level of conscious thought wherein are kept our suppressed wishes, our forgotten images, our instinctive drives. In the cellar of the Unconscious are kenneled those brutish desires which under excitement break out to surprise us with our bestiality. Also hidden there are those sources of mysterious strength which make us "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

"On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but passion is the gale."

And the control of these driving passions, according to the "new psychology," is developed not so much through the will or sensitized conscience, but by harnessing the currents of the Unconscious.

Following Freud, psychology and psychiatry have evolved improved ways of utilizing this subconscious dynamo of life. The principle of autosuggestion was stated by the Psalmist when he said, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"; but we have worked out modern ways of talking ourselves into new states of mind. We have learned the best time to drop suggestions down into the Unconscious, as for instance in the morning before the waking censor has closed the mental shutters,

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or at night when approaching slumber evokes the mood of relaxation. We now recognize the possibilities of making our mind work for us while we slumber, for we have discovered that sleep not only "knits up the unravelled sleeve of care," but often unties the knotty problem which has baffled our conscious thought. We awake with the elusive answer in our grasp. And if we be geniuses or modernistic poets, we may even jump up and jot down our brilliant flashes in the middle of the night.

Through the sublimation of our instinctive drives, we have found that the sex passion can be channeled into the creative energies of art and poetry, and we have demonstrated that the herd instinct can be utilized for intense nationalism. And now glands have gained sufficient importance to become a specialty.

With these modern scientific insights, the Pauline injunction, "Work out your own salvation," invites new effort. So many mental aids to self-help offer themselves that it seems scarcely necessary to read the rest of Paul's counsel: "For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do his good pleasure." Why call God in to help? Psychology and psychiatry seem so scientific; religion is shadowy with superstition. Why not meet with other emancipated minds in some secular auditorium, free from beclouding creeds and symbols? Thus grow those groups which are seeking to "be transformed by the renewing of their minds" without the aid of traditional religion.

What difference does it make to bring the Christian's God into the psychologist's picture? For one thing, it

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imports a sense of sacred responsibility to the process of self-improvement. The Christian cannot tinker with his mind and body as if they were his sole property. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." Because of this trusteeship, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This apostolic fear is not the craven cowardice of one who dreads a future punishment, but the sensitive carefulness of one who handles entrusted funds with more care than his own. It is the feeling of a soldier who is restrained by his uniform from doing something which would reflect on the honor of the service. It is a fear like that which upholds a son or a husband lest he let the family down.

When God is brought into the picture, personality becomes sacred. The individual life is linked with large interests and eternal purposes. The patient is no longer just another clinical case, but a person made precious through the sacrifices of love from the mother's cradle back to Calvary. When the new Roman governor of Cyrenaica, about 410 A.D., began to oppress the people, the brilliant Synesius wrote to him in unmistakable tone that human beings could not be treated as cheap, because "man is a thing of price, for Christ died for him." The scholar Muretus in 1554 said the same thing to the physicians who were about to try an experiment upon him.² This heightened appraisal of life due to the divine purposes which permeate it and the past sacrifices put into it may seem a fine point. It

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is one of those fine points which only a fine nature appreciates.

A second contribution which the Christian's God makes to the psychologist's method is in the sources of suggestion. Autosuggestion may thin the diet of the mind to the point of starvation. A Persian fable tells of a father who, departing on a long journey, left with his son a mirror. When the parent returned, he found the son starved to death, looking at himself. Thus introspection can close the intakes of the mind. Thought goes round and round in vicious circles. Fancies become fixed ideas. Worries grow from molehills to mountains. When into such closed circuits comes the God of the Galilean, he opens the windows of the mind toward the suggestions of nature wherein fowls are fed and lilies are clothed by a Heavenly Father; he lifts the level of vision from the immediate tomorrows to the long vistas of Providence; he sets the will to seek first the Kingdom of God, confident that secondary things will follow, sufficient unto the day of their need.

On the other hand, autosuggestion can inflate the ego as well as starve it. Power has a perverse habit of talking to itself. Surrounded by sycophants and fed with flattery, the man in power is in peril of "thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think."

"Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,
That he hath grown so great?"

The food of the Caesars has become the diet of dictators in our day. Eventually they usually expand to the exploding point, but not until they have devoured the

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liberties of all too many others. This self-hypnotism of power runs all the way down from the dictator complex in high places to the Pharisaical pride of the self-righteous. Such mental autointoxication cannot maintain itself in the presence of Jesus' God.

One of the most needed correctives in the current psychological interest is to see the value of adoration as over against mere meditation. When we look toward the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are lifted out of our littleness and lowered from our haughtiness. Our petition is saved from pettiness when we begin it saying thoughtfully, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." The sweep of the heavens and the surge of a great social purpose come in to ennoble our thinking. The Fourth Gospel expresses a profound principle when it interprets Jesus as saying, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." There are some things for which we cannot sincerely ask in Christ's name. That figure of Jesus standing at the door of a prayer keeps out unworthy requests.

When we feel with Paul that "it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure," we look to the Father for the prayer as well as for the answer. We love him because he first loved us. And our prayers like our love are the answers to a call. Prayer is not merely the asking for what we want; it is the hearing of what we need. Prayer is turning our faces upward that we may see the temptations from above.

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When God comes into the process of self-help, he brings not only a new sanctity to personality and a new source of suggestions, but also a new surge of power. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," is a promise which has been made good. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you," is another pledge which was fulfilled not only at Pentecost but times without number in the succeeding centuries. The first century found in Christ "the power of God," and the throb of his personality still pulses through any situation to which he is linked. The persistence of Christ's power is more than the perpetuation of a memory; the Pentecostal experiences of our time cannot be explained as the Church's birthday celebrations.

If what believers have called answers to prayer are only echoes coming back from an infinite emptiness, what has kept them resounding down the ages? Something there is which reinforces the cry of the spirit. Something which Jesus heard in the wilderness and in Gethsemane sustained him in Pilate's court and on the cross. Did he die for an idle dream, deceived by an echo? The results which have followed in his train belie so simple a conclusion. When we see how his cross has conquered, how the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, how truth crushed to earth has risen again, we bow before "a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness."

Granted that in part the power of prayer is generated by channeling the current of dominant desire through the millrace of the mind, nevertheless the deeper potency

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of prayer is felt as a force moving upon the seeker. To pray is to expose the shores of the mind to the incoming tide of God.

“Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in;
Come from the mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot has trod—
Some of us call it Longing,
And others call it God.”³

But when we do call it God, that incoming tide carries in not only the yearnings but the power to lift and float our stranded cargoes of cares and needs. The power of prayer is the lifting force of the infinite flowing into the finite, of the eternal entering into the temporal, of the universal opening into the local.

The Master, however, made prayer so much more personal than all this. For him, to pray was to commune with a Heavenly Father. To him prayer was a conversation between coworkers. “The philosophy of Jesus brought for the first time the conception of creativity to bear on the human problem, and pictured man as a colaborer with God in carrying on the creative work in the world.”⁴ This was Jesus’ unique contribution to prayer, giving to it a power not found in Greek mysticism or in modern psychology. When a person prays to the God of the Galilean, he has the confident feeling of a son speaking to a Father who worketh hitherto and still works. Every son of a true father knows how much that helps.

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Our concept of prayer must be freed from the fetters of natural law. In trying to define what takes place in prayer we draw our analogies from radio broadcasting, electric currents, and similar physical phenomena. Our faulty speech fumbles with such figures in the effort to express that which "breaks through language and escapes." Prayer, however, is to be described not by parallels but by parables. When the God of Christ comes into the petitioner's ken, the ineffable power of love enters the picture, with its miraculously multiplying force of comradeship, and its challenging summons to which the human soul rises. In the presence of Christ's God, petition expands into intercession, thereby purging desire of its selfish dross. And in praying for others, the spirit of man is giving vent to its highest function. The highest within thereby touches the highest beyond, joining with "him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

22. FROM MAGIC TO MASTERY

FROM luck to law is the step by which primitive man started his progress toward civilization. In the misty morning of antiquity miracles were no problem, for anything might happen. It was a world of ghosts and demons, of storms which dropped out of mysterious skies, and of pains which beset unexplored bodies. Luck was king of confusion and magic was the method by which men tried to appease him. Amulets and taboos multiplied, yet man was at the mercy of an arbitrary despot.

By a curious coincidence—or by a “power not ourselves that makes for righteousness”—the sixth century B.C. saw the dawning of a new religious insight in five different regions. Man awakened to the idea that he lived in a world of Law and not of Luck and Pull. In China Lao-tse taught that the summum bonum of life was to be found in spiritual union with Tao, the eternal reality which gives law to man and nature alike. Alongside came Confucius with his orderly system of ethics. In India Gautama planted the idea that the fruits of one's deeds in this life determined the fortune of the future existence—Karma. In Greece the concept of moral law emerged in the figure of Nemesis, the divinity of chastisement and retribution. In Persia and Palestine the concept of “action and award” was identified with the righteous Will of God. From a world of

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caprice and whim, the race was rising to creeds of moral control.

Leaving the rituals of magic, with their "thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oil," seers discerned what is good, and asked, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" If obeyed, these divine requirements guaranteed man's welfare; if violated, they caused his ills.

Experience, however, revealed this sixth-century creed as oversimplified. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." The wicked did not often prosper, and the friends of Job were not convincing when they traced the connection between his suffering and his sins. The exceptions to the rule of "action and award" were so numerous that an explanation was required. "On the whole, it may be said that in India and Greece the correction of the concept led toward apathy and despair, while in Persia and Palestine it led toward energy and hope; for in the first-named countries the injustices of the present life were explained by referring them to a former state of existence or to some fixed principle, while in the last-named countries they were explained as temporary injustices, to be rectified at some future date."¹

The Hebrew-Christian tradition took a realistic, but not a resigned, view of unrighteousness. Facing frankly the mystery of evil, the successors of Job repeat his confident cry, "I know that my redeemer liveth." This

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world is a battleground where clash forces of evil and good, darkness and light; but in it man has a fighting chance. That torch of hope, held by the Hebrew prophets, was taken up by Jesus, lifted above its messianic limits and military methods. The followers of Christ felt themselves allied to a triumphant leader, for which cause they could say: "We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; we are perplexed, but not in despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, but not destroyed." They were the confident seekers of a new heaven and a new earth.

This offer of a fighting chance, which delivered Judaism and Christianity from the fatalism and despair of Greece and India, created the appeal which won the Western world. The dynamic Palestinian faith had no serious competition from pale Stoicism or submissive Hinduism. It gave to the Mediterranean peoples hope of mastering the evils which beset them, and in that hope was cradled the spirit of modern science. The progress from luck to law advanced a stage from law to hope.

With this fighting chance and confident faith man set out to build a new earth. Between Augustine's *City of God* and Bacon's *New Atlantis* stretched those "dark ages" in which men deflected their efforts from earth to heaven; but the Renaissance of learning brought a revival of social hope. The dreams of Utopia were given color by the discoveries of new continents, the rise of democracies, the growth of wealth, the reformation in religion. Man's self-respect fed on his successes and fattened into self-sufficiency. The Ages of Faith

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were succeeded by the Age of Reason, and though its brief record was far from reassuring, it was followed by the Age of Science, which has been in the ascendancy ever since. Science in the hands of free men seemed to assure the longed-for paradise on earth. From luck to law, from law to hope, from hope to mastery—these were the steps by which man was working out his own salvation.

Now, however, the neat Utopias of science are as dry a subject as "the forgotten man." The escalator of evolution on which man felt himself steadily rising lies wrecked. A visitor tells of a religious service in the Church of St. Gervais in Paris, remembered as the sanctuary into which a German shell burst on a certain Good Friday during the War. A priest was discussing the possibility of salvation by science. At a dramatic climax in his discourse he suddenly pointed to the vault above, where the marks of the missile were still plainly visible and exclaimed, "La science, la science—voilà ce qu'a fait la science!"⁶

Science stands repudiated as redeemer. The question now is, Whither will men turn in reaction from the false hopes of salvation through science? There is danger of a return to magic. Signs of this appear in several directions. Two may be mentioned here.

One line along which science may surrender to magic is that of healing. The orthodox religious attitude toward spiritual healing is hard to maintain in an atmosphere of intelligence. The Roman Catholic Church holds that Christ conferred upon certain individuals the special power of continuing his miracles. Peter and the

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apostles healed, cast out devils, and did other works of wonder. This superhuman power has been passed on to supremely gifted persons. Succeeding centuries have produced their saints, and no saint can be canonized unless several miracles can be ascribed to his credit.

Protestants, however, have not been inclined to accept as authentic the reports of miraculous deeds done by these later saints. Only those of the first few centuries after Christ were given credence. Later, doubt fell on the accounts of the miracles performed by the Church Fathers. Finally by the eighteenth century, Protestant thought had pushed the era of miracle back to the New Testament times. Up to the closing of the New Testament canon, Christians were believed to have demonstrated supernatural power; after that date, their gift departed.

This traditional Protestant view of miracles was a difficult one to hold. Its weakness was obvious both to science and to religion. The scientific objection was a weighty one. It is hard for an intelligent man to believe that about 100 A.D., when the books of the New Testament were finished, God said, "Up to this time I have performed miracles, but henceforth I shall run this world strictly according to natural law." It insults the intelligence to say that the lawfulness of God began at any given date. If Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and forever," so must God be. If he works by law today, he must always have worked by law. So says the man of scientific temper. Hence he cannot bring himself to believe that God changed his mode of

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action from the miraculous to the nonmiraculous on the day the last scroll of the Bible was written.

The religious objection to the traditional view is even more serious than the scientific. To say that the miracles of Christ were limited to the few brief years he was on the earth in the flesh makes the career of Jesus a sort of divine drama exhibited once and withdrawn forever. Jesus did not picture himself as merely an actor on the world's stage. "Before Abraham was, I am," said Jesus to the Jews. And the Fourth Gospel voices the eternal existence of Christ: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Jesus of history was the manifestation in the flesh of the eternal Christ spirit. He was, as it were, the flash of lightning which reveals the everlasting electricity. The lightning flash of godliness appeared in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, but the electric power of divinity is available to be harnessed to human life eternally. If we take Christ at New Testament value as living Lord, we have no ground for saying that he manifested a power in Galilee which ceased at his crucifixion. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also."

If miraculous power was present in the Bible times, it is available today. Such is the dictum of religious faith. If God works by law today, he worked by law during Biblical times. Such is the reasoning of science, and both are right. Both "miracle" and law were in God's order during that distant yesterday. Both "miracle" and law are in God's order today—and forever.

There is ample room for "miracle" in a universe

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run by law. The more of life we chart, the more we see remains to be explored and explained and mapped. As Pascal put it in the seventeenth century, "Reason's final move consists in recognizing that there are an infinity of things which go beyond her." The world is not irrational but suprarational. It is because life outruns reason that we have "miracles." A "miracle" is an event with which human logic has not yet caught up. It is not an interruption of law, but the working of a law which reason has not yet charted. In reference to the gospel accounts of healing, the intelligent might say: "I do not know how Jesus made the lame to walk and the lepers to be clean, how he made the deaf to hear and the blind to see. But because I do not understand the method I do not deny the fact. The limits of human understanding at any moment are not the limits of God's doing. He does many things which are beyond me. Some of the works of Jesus are more explicable to me today than they were to his contemporaries. Perhaps tomorrow I shall understand more of the principles by which Christ performed his marvelous cures. However that may be, I do not believe Christ did what he did by suspending or violating the laws which medical science has discovered to be valid. What he did do was to bring into use laws higher than modern science has yet charted."

The forces and laws by which Jesus healed and worked exist today. They are eternally present. Electricity was in the atmosphere before and after Franklin caught it on his kite and key. The air's ability to carry sound was present before and after Marconi. That

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power has not changed since the day Marconi predicted that wireless messages could be transmitted twenty miles. The reason that we can now talk by radio across the ocean is that we have learned how to make better use of the eternal forces of the air. Shall we who have worked so unceasingly to utilize the agencies revealed by Franklin and Marconi leave unused the powers shown us by Christ? For his sake and for our own we must not neglect them.

To try the laws and powers of Christ does not mean that we turn our backs on the principles and methods of science. We follow the roads which science has paved with its laws as far as they go, but we recognize that the end of the improved pavement is not the end of the possible achievement. We believe that there is a power that worketh in us "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." We saw that power revealed in Jesus. We desire to recapture it for ourselves. Our modern life needs to count on the grace of God plus the laws of nature.

Coleridge and Wordsworth had an agreement that the former would treat the supernatural to make it credible and the latter would handle the ordinary to make it wondrous. Both services are needed by society today. With our scientific analysis we must go on reducing all we can to the range of the rational and understandable. But with our spiritual insight we must cultivate the mystery and wonder in the commonplace. Life is too large and varied and infinite to be explained wholly by the formulas of science. Let the Fundamentalists of Science remember this. We must count on law; but

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we must also expect miracles, the events of whose laws outrun reason. Belief in miracle without law makes life erratic and undependable. Belief in law without miracle leaves life without luster.

But this wedding of charted law with uncharted law, or "miracle," is being tragically broken by many today. It is being put asunder on the one hand by those who ignore law in their effort to use the miraculous power of Christ. There are healing cults, there are quacks and charlatans, who try to use the words of Christ as a magical substitute for the medical principles science has discovered. There are those who pray childishly for God's help without using the known means of helping themselves. "God helps those who help themselves." Christ's mysterious laws of aid, whether in disease or elsewhere, are not to be a substitute for human efforts, but a supplement to them. Unless we work the laws we know we must not expect the miracles of God. Much harm is being done today by those who try it.

On the other hand this union of law and "miracle" is being broken by those who trust only the charts which science has made. There are doctors who call into consultation other specialists, but would think it futile to call in the Great Physician. There are business men who never count on the resources of their infinite Silent Partner. There are even preachers who run their parishes quite as if there were no Holy Spirit. They trust only to finite things, wholly forgetful of the fact that

"Infinite power of God upholds us,
Infinite love of Christ enfolds us."

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The benighted modern man who trusts only the scheme of law and ignores the grace of God, who is so enamored of the scientific method that he sneers at anything which outdistances reason, who closes the windows of his mind to the light of faith which outshines logic—that man is missing the “life which is life indeed.”

Law and miracle must be linked together in our modern thought. They are both children of the living God, the former known and tamed; the latter unknown and untamed. But if we use the laws we know in expectancy of the others yet to be revealed, the miracles of tomorrow will be “greater works” than the “miracles” of yesterday.

A second point to guard in preventing a return to magic is that of divine guidance. Perhaps this warning should be preceded by testimony to support belief in God’s leading, for the enlarged world revealed by science leaves many in doubt about divine providence.

Yet the very age and sweep of our universe may well heighten belief in a divine guidance running through it. When we think back into the aeons of time through which this physical order has been evolving, back to the days when reptiles emerged from the slime; when savage monsters sat up on their haunches and began to blink their eyes and lick their bloody chops; and then when we think that out of that jungle of beastly giant-hood, there appeared a being called man with a light in his eyes never seen on land or sea, a light which reflected such new things as love and duty and hope; and then when we try to trace how that human being has worked up from savagery to the arts of speech, music,

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painting and the sciences of printing, telegraphy, and radio—when our minds try to grasp that long sweep of progress, the only explanation which seems to account for it is that behind this universe there is an intelligent purpose, a guiding hand.

Difficult as it may be to see that guiding purpose at work in many aspects, the alternative explanations are even harder to accept. The doctrine of chance? But it strains belief that blind chance could shuffle the material elements and then draw from the mixture the mind of a Plato, the conscience of a Socrates, the genius of a Shakespeare, or the character of a Christ. Moreover, how could the doctrine of chance explain the emergence of that orderliness which the physicist finds in the electron and the astronomer sees in the heavens? No, from the hiss of a primeval serpent to the strains of a Fifth Symphony, from the muddy cave of the savage to the symmetry of the Taj Mahal, from the wolves in the pack to nations in a peace conference—these are steps of progress too great to be explained as the result of mere chance.

If not chance, then perhaps this universe is a machine. But mechanistic view is now out of date in scientific circles. Can intelligence in man evolve out of an unintelligent machine? Can man's concern for moral values be explained if there is nothing at the heart of the universe that cares? It is easier to explain the existence of evil under a good God than to account for goodness in a mechanistic world.

Yet granted that there is evidence of divine guidance in the universe, granted also that there are many signs

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which suggest an intelligent purpose in the great sweeps of social progress across the ages, does God's guidance extend to the individual?

The quick answer given by many is the negative. But weigh the testimony for special providence. The belief is basic to both Old and New Testaments. The singers of Israel in numerous psalms show this confidence in God's guidance. The Wisdom Writer in Proverbs echoes the same assurance: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." And at the apex of Scripture stands Jesus comforting the anxious with the reminder that the Heavenly Father who notes the falling sparrow has a care for his human child. Jesus even counseled his disciples to trust divine guidance for their very speech at times: "It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak."

We may call these experiences what we will, mystical illusions or self-deceptions, but the point is that belief in divine guidance has been held by millions of people who were quite the equal of the skeptics in intelligence and often far superior in moral character and reliability. In fact, it is men who have believed in divine guidance who have done the greatest work in the world. To be sure, we can counter with the statement that people who thought they were divinely guided have done some of the most damnable things in the world—burned fellow men at the stake, started wars, killed little children. Yet taking the long view and judging by its fruits, we can say the belief in divine guidance has demonstrated its working value. The people who have held it have been the builders of a better world.

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It is into the interpretation of guidance that magic creeps. Hosea interprets God as saying, "I drew them with cords of a man." Now the cords of a man are not like the harness of a horse. They are not outside pressure, but inner intuition. In similar vein writes Mr. A. J. Russell, whose volume *For Sinners Only* is a standard work with the Oxford Groups: "Guidance must be thought of as not mechanical, but as becoming clear through reason, evidence, and luminous thinking. God speaks to us in all the ways of human understanding."

That is a very sane statement. Would that all interpretations of guidance were as sane. Guidance is not mechanical. If, for example, there is a washout on the railroad, so that my train makes me miss an appointment in town, it is not for me to say this is divine guidance that I should not have made the appointment. Or suppose that the train which I planned to take but missed is wrecked with the loss of many lives. Am I to interpret that as God's special providence for me? If so, how shall we explain his attitude toward the unfortunate dead? Or consider the case of a certain religious leader. A group of people had gathered to hear his message. He arrived a half-hour late with the explanation that he had been guided to remain an extra thirty minutes in meditation. On the basis of such an interpretation, what is to be said about God's guidance for the waiting crowd? God should have been equally considerate of them and delayed their arrival. Our observation of busy people who are kept waiting is that they are not exactly in the mood of spiritual meditation. In this matter of guidance we must not be mechanical.

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We must beware lest we confuse coincidence with divine consciousness and our personal whims with God's purposes.

Nor should we make guidance a trivial affair. Right it is to begin each day with a prayer for divine illumination and leading, but we should not stop and ask God at every turn which road to take, which person to address, which book to pick up. God leads us by the cords of a man, "reason, evidence, and luminous thinking," not by the leading strings of a child.

Moreover, we should not be too speedy in our expectations of divine guidance. Men do give amazing testimonies of quick answers to prayer. A minister told recently of needing a thousand dollars for a certain church enterprise. He prayed for it one evening and the next morning a check for that amount was in his mail. He seemed to believe that was a direct answer to his prayer. It may have been. But when we get to thinking of God working in such quick fashion, we are likely to lose faith when higher help lingers.

One trouble with some churchmen is that they are spiritual speculators rather than spiritual investors. They look for the quick returns of religion and are too impatient to be content with long-term investments. Those who gamble with God are likely to lose their faith. Many such people give up prayer because they seem to get no dividends from it at the end of the day. Those who persist in it find life growing more fertile and productive. Devout souls who put their energies into godly enterprises and sacrificial service never feel cheated at the end of life. Our religion must be a challenge before

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it can become a comfort. It must call out the best in us before we can find the best in it. We must think as hard as we can, find out all the facts we can, before we can expect God's guidance.

Hosea's statement sheds another light on divine leading. It is "with bands of love." Does God lead with the bands of love? That is hard to believe at times. We live in a world where innocent children suffer for the sins of parents, where good people sometimes go bankrupt while the wicked prosper, where hurricanes lick up towns and earthquakes swallow them, where harmless bystanders are struck down by gangsters' bullets and young men pour out their blood in wars to protect old men's gold.

Hard is it to see a guiding providence in all this. But before we try to see it, let us clear away some foggy misconceptions of God's guidance in calamities. Let us be done with that profane piety which reads the will of God into our own willfulness. We neglect our health and dissipate our energies until we invite disease, and then we say, "It is God's will." We allow children to live in unwholesome conditions until one of them dies, and then we stand over the coffin of the underprivileged child and say, "God took him." We drift along with stupid and dishonest diplomacy until we get into a war and then we say, "This is God's cause." We follow our shortsighted selfishness until we drop into a general business depression, and then we ask, "Why did God send this?" Such calamities are not God's will, but God's agony.

When we have taken from God's shoulders these man-

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caused calamities, there still remain hardships grievous to be borne. How can these be if this is a beneficent world? What we can say is, that only in a world where men can go wrong is there any virtue in going right; that only where goodness can often go unrewarded is it possible to have unselfish conduct worthy to be called good; that only where there is the risk of inexplicable failure could we have the exquisite beauty of love which counts not the cost and calculates not the reward; that only where there is the possibility of hell can there be the materials for heaven.

And something else we can say too. When we are in doubt about our divine guidance, we can test it by "the bands of love." When we think that we are moved of God, we must ask ourselves whether the motive is love. That test will tell us, for "God is love." It will show us whether we are led by Hosea's God with his "bands of love" or by Hitler's God with his bands of hate. It will keep us from those cruelties which we so often cover with the cloak of fanatical piety.

23. FROM THE CHURCH TO HER CHILDREN—AND BACK

LAST August a writer in the *American Magazine* undertook to answer the question why people do not go to church. While this is an old subject, the recent article dealt with it in a new way. The author did not say that people stayed away from church because the sermons were dull, the denominations pitifully divided, the parishioners piously hypocritical—all of which charges we have heard times without number. He struck a different note. After interviewing people in all parts of the country, he declared that the situation simmers down to this: The church is not attended today because it has nothing to offer which cannot be found in better form elsewhere. The writer generously admits that the Church has rendered useful services in the past. But now other agencies have taken over its work and the Church can be dismissed as outworn and outgrown. In short, it is out of a job.

The first task, which he says once belonged to the Church but is now taken away, is that of charity. In olden times the Church looked after the poor; today this relief is dispensed by secular social organizations and by governmental agencies. These, according to the writer, are doing a better job of aiding the poor than the Church can do.

It may well be admitted that our modern social agencies have brought charity to a higher point of profes-

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sional efficiency than the church ever achieved, but can organized charity and relief, however efficient, beget the brotherhood we need? Millions given to community chests by persons who know and care little about the recipients, but only wish to stand well with their fellow-givers, millions given grudgingly through governmental taxes—such sums standing alone will not solve our poverty problem. Such impersonal giving may only serve to harden the givers and soften the receivers. “The gift without the giver is bare.”

Our organized charity and relief need a saving element, and that saving element is charitableness. Charity without charitableness may be worse than nothing. “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” The milk of human kindness is the oil without which the machinery of organized charity runs dry.

And it is this element of charitableness which the Church or some similar society must put into charity. Toward that end, the Christian Church provides a common table of Holy Communion before which, as the Duke of Wellington once said to a private soldier, men are all equal. In a truly religious group charity is not thought of as flowing like a river from higher to lower levels, but as moving like the tide across the bosom of the ocean on a level, drawn by the attraction of a power above. Moreover, when men sit Sunday after Sunday before the mind of Christ, they begin to catch his power of imagination which was able so to put himself into other persons' places that he could say, “Whoso-

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ever hath done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, hath done it unto me."

Without this cultivation of spirit and imagination, the gifts of our purse avail little, even the Golden Rule becomes sounding brass. We so often say glibly that we could solve all our social ills if we would only practice the Golden Rule of doing unto another as we would that he should do unto us; but the trouble is that most of us have not enough imagination to know what we should want done to us if we were in the other fellow's place. The result is that we do to him what we think is good for him, and that usually irritates him. A charitable spirit and an understanding mind must go with our gifts if they are to be effective.

Furthermore, the Church or some similar society must give range as well as charitableness to our charity, which in truth "begins at home" and so often stops there. We may see the needs near at hand, but it takes effort to keep lifting our horizons of sympathy. Some years ago, when the Nobile Exposition made its ill-fated attempt to reach the North Pole, the report came back by way of Leningrad that a Swedish scientist had been left to die by his comrades because he was not able to continue the trek. When that word reached Russia there was a righteous outcry at the inhumanity of abandoning a man to die in the snow. At about the same time, however, an American church was distributing food supplies to needy folk in Russia. One of the Soviet commissars came to an official of the church asking, "What are you Americans over here for? What are you trying to get out of us?" Men could clearly understand

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why you should not leave a man to die in the snow at your feet, but they could not comprehend why you should go halfway round the world to rescue those who were dying. The first is mere humanity; the second is Christianity.

True religion keeps pushing out the horizon of normal neighborliness with the disturbing question: "Who is my neighbor?" Such missionary spirit is not duplicated by secular or governmental agencies. And without such widening of sympathy and assistance, what is to check the tendencies now so rife toward narrow nationalism, class consciousness, and government by blocs?

It may, of course, be contended that the Church fails miserably in cultivating this wider and more imaginative charitableness. It does come far short. But the job is there to do.

The second task of the Church, which, according to this critic, has been taken over by secular agencies, is that of healing. He admits that the Church was once a fountain of healing, but it has been replaced as physician by the science of medicine.

Quite correct it is to describe the Christian Church as a "fountain of healing." It was the interest in imparting health manifested by the Founder of Christianity which won for him the title of the "Great Physician" and gave impetus to the art of healing. Now, however, the healing art has developed into a medical science which maintains magnificent hospitals and spreads the gospel of public health. It is a fair question to ask whether hospitals could extend their free clinics and enlarge their public services without the financial help

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of the people whose philanthropic impulses are cultivated by the church. Certain it is that the churches are still called upon to assist in hospital campaigns.

But there is a respect other than financial in which medicine depends on religious aid. During the past several years a group of leading physicians in New York City have been meeting frequently with representatives of the clergy to consider the points at which religion and medicine might co-operate more closely. It is impressive to note the recognition accorded to religious values by some of our most representative medical practitioners. Many of them may not go as far as Dr. Alexis Carrel in their attitudes toward prayer, but they are quite ready to admit their practice needs those mental helps which come from religion, just as intelligent ministers are realizing how much of their work requires the counsel and co-operation of competent physicians.

No isolated 'testimony' is the following statement made at a medical congress by a well-known nerve specialist: "As an alienist, and one whose life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of spirits, and all miserable sequels of a disturbed mind, I would undoubtedly give place to the simple habit of prayer."

There is undoubtedly an awakening recognition of religion's service to the practice of medicine. But, of course, many will say that these values of prayer and spiritual attitudes can be preserved without the Church. To them the answer is a question: "How much is prayer

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cultivated in families divorced from the Church? Does the second generation of a churchless family do much praying?" When we find that habits of prayer and religious devotion are vitally and widely maintained without the church stimulus, then we may admit that medicine does not need the Church to develop its spiritual aids. It may be said that the Church does not make very vital use of prayer. Nevertheless, the job is there to do.

The third function of which the Church is now relieved, according to our critic, is that of changing the character, or "converting the soul." In this work of making bad men good, the Church "is being replaced by gland specialists, dietitians, psychiatrists, and psychologists who hold that crime and abnormality are the result of disordered glands, improper nourishment, disease, poverty, ignorance, and mental derangement of one form or another."

It would admittedly be hard to overestimate the amount of crime and abnormality which can be cured by the above-mentioned procedures. Every minister has in his parish many persons whose situations call for the aid of psychologists and social workers. Salvation is a salvage of the whole personality for this world as well as the next. Souls cannot be saved in a vacuum, and environment enters into the process of redemption.

Nevertheless, one thinks of cases which puzzle him as to their cure by these psychological and dietary methods. Take, for instance, a landlord who lives on the avenue of affluence, but persists in squeezing his tenants into unwholesome tenements. Just what treatment should

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be accorded him? Is his trouble disordered glands or disease? Hardly, for he employs a bevy of doctors to keep him in health, and surely some of them would operate if there were the slightest excuse. Is he improperly nourished? No, for he dines at the best clubs. Poverty the cause of his injustice? He has more money than he needs. Is it ignorance? He has a college degree, whatever that may mean. Is it mental derangement? He is considered very clever in business circles. That man's trouble is a bit hard to reach by these new instruments of psychology and sociology.

And one thinks of other cases in which injurious actions can scarcely be attributed to poverty, ignorance, diet, or disease. Just how are we to cure such well-fed, well-housed, healthy-bodied, respectable sinners? When the Master was upon the earth, he gave his major efforts to the unsocial mental sins of the respectable, such as pride, narrow-mindedness, uncharitableness and their like. He realized that such sins are so subtle that they can be carried for years without the possessors being aware of them, and thus "the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God" before these genteel sinners. Jesus knew, too, that one proud, selfish, respectable person in a place of power can do more damage than a dozen drunken derelicts.

Moreover, consider even the wayward minor or flagrant criminal. Admit that unwholesome environment, bad heredity, and improper diet have been enormous factors in perverting the personality. Nevertheless, when we find a person who gives these as the complete alibi for his wrongdoing, we have a case that does not

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offer much hope of cure. To change a life, there must be some recognition of the person's responsibility for changing himself. There must be some sense of shame, some spirit of repentance.

With profound gratitude to the psychologists for the new insights and techniques which they have given us, we are not convinced that we have outwitted sin by changing its name to "complex" or that we have discarded our devilishness by treating our glands. We can still make the answer that Dr. Samuel Johnson gave to the fussy lady who once asked him how a person knew when he had sinned. The old doctor replied: "Madam, a man knows it, and that's enough."

Making full allowance for the external conditioning forces which shape behavior, there are certain inner initiating factors which cannot be ignored. Call them by their old-fashioned names of "conscience," "spirit," "soul," "will," or change the labels if you like. They remain as realities. And it is to these that the churches address themselves, thereby rendering a service for which no substitute has yet been devised.

Dr. C. G. Jung, distinguished European psychologist, writes out of thirty years' practice these words: "Among all my patients in the second half of life, that is to say over thirty-five, there has not been one whose problem in the last resort has not been that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and not one of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook,"¹

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When leading psychologists are thus coming to recognize the contribution of religion to the "cure of souls," it seems a bit behind the times scientifically to dismiss religion as outmoded in this field.

A fourth function once belonging to the Church, but today taken over by outsiders, is the work of education. Admitting that the religious sects were responsible for starting the schools and colleges of America, our critic of the Church reminds us that education has now become the American passion and has outrun religion. That is true. Our public school system, our great secular colleges and state universities have gained such momentum that they will go on without financial assistance from the churches. Increasing numbers of our youth want an education. Whereas in 1890 only six per cent of our young people advanced as far as the senior high school, today some sixty per cent reach that stage. Education has become a public, rather than a religious, function.

Nevertheless, our best educators are growing ever more concerned about the trends in the training in our youth. They see the folly of technical training without character cultivation, of teaching persons how to do things without imparting a purpose for doing them. Cleverness without character cannot make a happy society.

And what is more, education can be worse than futile. It can be dangerous. Poisonous ideas in the mind are, as Socrates said, far more dangerous than poisonous food purchased in the market. Poison food can be thrown away, but evil instruction becomes a part of per-

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sonality. Or as Rufus King once asked in a celebrated case, "Why should I be taxed to educate my neighbor's child, if the education you give him only makes a little rascal twice as sharp without any protection to my throat?" And let us not fool ourselves into thinking that the mounting cost of crime in this country is entirely due to our illiterate and foreign-born. The most sinister aspect of crime today is that it has become a business, scientifically organized by some of our best brains. Education becomes a menace when it merely sharpens the acquisitive instincts and skills without imparting creative purpose and moral control. We have to teach integrity adequate to Wall Street as well as to Main Street, for our school youth will go to both places.

This essential character education cannot be given in glittering generalities. The copybook maxim, "Honesty is the best policy," may be learned by heart and yet make little difference in dealing with specific situations.

"Be kind and be gentle to those who are old,
For kindness is dearer and better than gold,"

is a pretty formula remembered by many who fight any workable plan for social security. Moral instruction cannot be imparted by multiplication tables of golden texts. Let a teacher in the public school or some of our state universities begin to make specific applications of the honesty principle to business or public problems and see how soon the hue and cry would be raised against him as a propagandist.

It is this purposive moral control which the Church

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exists to give and to keep up-to-date. There must be some place where the time-honored virtues can be freely examined and their implications projected into the new frontiers of social living. That place is the church. By playing the mind of the great Hebrew prophets and the Christ, week after week, on the old moral codes, the teaching of the Church prods the conscience with contemporary problems. Granted that the Church has done a very partial job in this matter of character education, that some of our Sunday-school pupils have become Dillingers and some church pillars have fallen into shame; nevertheless, the job is there to do.

The fifth and last contribution of the Church which its critics claim now has been lost to outsiders is that of inspiring great art and music. We recognize at once that art and music have outgrown the Church. The decorative artistry of our business buildings, even our railroad stations, makes many of our churches look plain. Civic opera companies and motor car organizations present musical masterpieces with a magnificence beyond the reach of ordinary parish budgets. Radio programs create a standard of test which makes the work of the village choirs trying to themselves and often even more trying to their listeners.

Yet while the production of art and music has now extended from the Church into hands often more competent of execution, how about the continued cultivation of the artistic soil? Professor Hocking of Harvard reminds us that the great ages of religion have preceded the great ages of art and science, "for they were attending to the fertilization of the ground." We must not forget

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that great art springs from spirits who feel themselves in the play of great destinies. Rollicking ditties may rise from the "Sidewalks of New York"; but Haydn's inspiration for an oratorio comes, as he said, from the feeling that the very heavens had opened. Jazz may be the emotional outlet of a machine-age environment, but the lasting creations of great composers are cases of "deep calleth unto deep." Economic questions, real as they are, do not inspire operas or oratorios. Our Bernard Shaws and Eugene O'Neills cannot keep away from the religious field.

Could this feeling of destiny and depth so necessary to art be preserved without the Church? What would happen to the music and painting and drama of a country if the churches were closed for a generation? Such questions lead to conjectures rather than conclusions. We venture to suggest that there would be a shallowing of experience fatal to the sources of art.

It would be hard to imagine a more revealing description of what happens to religion when removed from the Church than in the closing confession of the brilliant writer whose criticism called forth this present reply. These are his final words: "I feel like a musician without an instrument, a student without books, a man in a strange land without a guide or an interpreter. Meanwhile I, a religious man, if not a churchgoing one, continue to grope. I wish I knew what I sought."

Apparently here are needs which the successors of the Church do not fill. What this man misses is what the Church is meant to be—an instrument for the soul's

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music, a library for the spiritual studies, a guide for the mind's groping, an interpreter to show seekers what it is they seek. However imperfectly the Church has fulfilled these functions, it will not be out of a job until these services are "found in a better form elsewhere."

24. FROM SCAPEGOAT TO SAVIOUR

AT the center of our Lord's Prayer and our search for power is the petition: "Deliver us from evil."

Evil, in the form of failure, follows the good as shadows pursue light. Evil, in the form of baneful heredity, clings to each new generation as a stubborn winter with its recurring coldness stifles the stirrings of spring. In the form of unwholesome environment it engulfs us as the "sea of troubles" surrounded the island soul of Hamlet. In the form of inner disposition, it smolders with volcanic fire in our veins and erupts at times with satanic force. Evil, in its social range, hardens boys into gangsters, fills headlines with crimes, and hurls nations into wars.

It is this hydra-headed force from which we seek freedom when we pray, "Deliver us from evil"—a longing as old as the first tear and as fresh as the morning paper. Within the bounds of our Bible are recorded various stages through which the great Hebrew race sought deliverance from evil. The Bible, seen in its long sweep, is a Drama of Deliverance.

In Act I we see primitive people struggling to free themselves from the ills which beset their flocks, their families, their fighters. They lived in tribes. They thought in groups. Not having individualized the sense

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of sin, the earliest Hebrews thought they could get rid of their evils by group activity.

Their attitude was symbolized by a ceremony of atonement in which two goats were taken. One was set apart by lot as a sin offering to Jehovah. On the other goat the priest laid both hands, and confessed over it the sins of the tribe. The animal was then led to the edge of camp and sent off into the wilderness, thereby supposedly carrying with it the sins of the people.

The ceremony seems an infantile procedure of the race's outgrown childhood; but that vanishing goat was called "the scapegoat," which is a word of very modern sound. In fact, the effort to deliver ourselves from our evils by finding a scapegoat is a most common practice. A man becomes involved in some personal difficulty and all too frequently the first way which he takes to get out of it is to make someone else "the goat," as we say. Or a racket is uncovered, revealing dishonest practices which have been preying on certain business circles. A great hue and cry is raised; perhaps an investigation is started, a few crooked individuals are ferreted out and punished, then the popular interest dies down. A few preventive measures may be inaugurated. Yet, making scapegoats through a criminal investigation does not remove the roots of the evil.

Twenty years ago we Americans were girding ourselves for an impending war. Germany at that time was the Western world's scapegoat. We believed that if we could smash the Hohenzollerns we would purge the world of those evils which threatened peace and democ-

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racy. With Germany crushed, it was to be a world without war or dictators. The irony of it all is now seen as too tragic for smiles. What have we? More and worse dictators, bigger and more brutal weapons of war.

The trouble with scapegoats is that they ease our consciences but do not end our tendencies to sin. We find an escape-valve for our consciences by venting our scorn on the sins of others, thereby relieving the pain without curing the cancer of evil.

The Hebrew people came to realize this after a time, and the biblical drama of deliverance moved on to Act II. The great prophets, aware that sin was something too personal to be purged by taking it out on others, declared that each person must pay for his own sins. Jeremiah put it vividly when he said, "They shall say no more the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge."

This conception marks a more adult stage in the growing conscience of the Hebrew race. They were putting away the childish trait of blaming their evils on their forefathers or their tribe. A person is growing up when he begins to see that, however bad his heredity or his environment, he is nevertheless at some points responsible for his evils. Until he sees and admits this, there is little hope of his redemption.

When, however, a man does stand up to his situation and say, "I'll be responsible for my own sins," he finds himself facing an impossible task. Our lives are not

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woven together like threads in a cloth. They flow together like tributary waters in a river. For a person to try to erase the effects of his own sins is as futile as for a man from Cincinnati to go down to Memphis and attempt to separate from the Mississippi River the waters which come from his Ohio section.

When, therefore, we human beings try to deliver ourselves from our own sins, we discover that we cannot free ourselves from the evils which flow over us from the wrongdoings of others. We may purify ourselves, but we still suffer from the influences of an impure society. We may drive our own lives with care, but we have to travel roads made dangerous by the driving of others. Many of the evils which we suffer are the fault of others, and there are no social fences or moral quarantines which can completely shut them off.

Furthermore, we cannot deliver others from the evils which have overflowed from our lives on them. There is a tragic element of truth in the cynical Omar's words:

"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

It is all very manly to assume responsibility for our sins and to attempt our own deliverance, each for himself; but it cannot be done. By ourselves we cannot "take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them."

The Hebrews came to see this after a time, and the Biblical drama of deliverance moves on to Act III. The

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prophet Isaiah reached a high peak of understanding when he pictured the necessity of a "Suffering Servant" who voluntarily takes upon himself the burdens and troubles of others. Of him the prophet says: "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . ; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

In that passage is revealed the truth that sin cannot be confined to the one who commits it, nor suffering limited to the one who deserves it. The innocent must suffer for the guilty and the willing must bear the burdens of the weak.

Portia's argument is as pertinent today as when Shakespeare phrased it:

"Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."

We sympathize with the underprivileged who cry, "We want justice, not charity." And charity without justice is as futile as salve on a broken limb. Nevertheless, cold justice cannot hold society together. The family unit cannot function without the vicarious principle. Household expenses may be budgeted, but not family experiences. Imagine the attempt to keep father's monthly account in the home's bookkeeping: How much did he put in during the month? Did father get his

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money's worth? What does he owe mother for the companionship he denied her? What value shall be put on the time he gave to solving son's school situation? Or keep a mother's books: How estimate the cost of the sleepless nights beside a sickbed? What was the damage done when her heart was broken by a child's waywardness? Futile is the effort to keep love's books. "In the course of justice" no family would see salvation. Families survive because mothers give extra care to ugly ducklings and fathers take added pains with handicapped and perverse lads. No mathematics exists whereby members of a family can make up the debits and credits of service rendered. Homes are "saved by grace."

The community, likewise, can live only when leavened by something more than justice. The individualist may pride himself on a pay-as-you-go principle, but our personal careers are so woven together that we bear one another's burdens involuntarily. Neighbors' automobile accidents raise the insurance rate on our car. Social life is possible only because there are those willing to be wounded for the transgressions of others. Mr Lin Yu Tang, distinguished interpreter of China, asserts that native Chinese religions have more appeal to the nationals than have the important versions of Christianity. Yet he admits that those native faiths have failed to beget the "Good Samaritan" virtues toward strangers. Hence, while Chinese family life is as lovely as rare old lace, the civic fabric has been fragile to a point of weakness inviting invasion. Social life is a process of give and take,

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but it survives only when some give more than they take. Society is saved by its "suffering servants."

This truth, caught by the later Hebrew prophets, is echoed by many a humanistic writer of the post-war period. These heralds of a brave new day picture a dark world brightened by deeds of human nobility. A Bertrand Russell describes with haunting beauty the sad hopelessness of man's future, but he would have man go to his doom with dignity. A Joseph Wood Krutch sees no divine destiny lifting man above the animal, yet he would hold human nature above the beast. Lacking cosmic support, we mortals aboard this drifting raft of earth are to acquit ourselves like men.

The Biblical drama of deliverance, however, goes beyond this bravery of doubt. There is also Act IV.

In "Green Pastures" a scene shows God pacing the floor of His heavenly office, in despair at the continuing sins of His children. He had done all that justice seemed to demand. He had created the earth and seen that it was good. He had given man to have dominion over His creation and equipped him with faculties designed for mastery. For men's guidance God had sent judges and prophets; for their correction He had let loose floods and plagues. What remained to be done for their redemption?

As God ponders the question He observes a shadow on the wall outside His door. On inquiry He learns it to be the shadow of Hosea, the prophet who had pictured divine love after the pattern of a husband winning back his wife by patient, suffering devotion. Did Hosea's shadow on the heavenly door suggest that God himself

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must suffer for the salvation of His children? "Yes" is the answer given by "Green Pastures." That is also the answer given by the Gospels.

To the law of justice was added the grace of God. Grace is more than mercy. The latter carries the flavor of pity; the former is free from all condescension. Mercy forgives the sin which has been committed; grace extends that which induces repentance. Mercy feeds the starved prodigal on his return from the husks of the far country; grace goes forth to meet the son while yet afar off. This is the grace of God revealed in the Gospels.

Jesus never used the word "grace," but he manifested that which made the term spring to the lips of his followers. In his own person he possessed the charm and attractiveness to which the Greeks gave the word taken over as "grace." In his spirit was a graciousness deeper than manner, a considerateness which came down to the level of the lowly without showing a stoop, a sensitivity which saved embarrassing situations without sacrificing vital principles, a delicacy of touch which did not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.

To the apostles, this gracefulness of action and graciousness of spirit mirrored more than their leader's nature. The disciples of Jesus, unlike those of Socrates, were not mere followers of a teacher, trying to perpetuate his principles. They looked upon their crucified master as having entered into the earth through death, risen to mingle again with men, and ascended to be with his Heavenly Father. To them Jesus was "Lord of heaven and earth," a partner in the divine enterprise.

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When the apostles spoke of the "grace of the Lord Jesus" they beheld the composite portrait of a gracious Galilean and a God of grace.

In that belief lay the apostolic hope of salvation. Under the law man stood condemned. He could not balance his books with God on the basis of justice. Unable to make it up to God, we can, however, "make up" with God, "who both reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." The household of faith is a family of God wherein injustices cannot be made up, but love can "make up." Society can be saved by grace into the beloved community. With eye to both individual and group, both Jew and Gentile, Peter said: "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved, even as they."

The nineteenth century put its closing decades under the spell of natural law. The dictatorship of science censored the reports of divine grace as sentimental. Sons reduced the "miracles" of their fathers to mathematics and the love of God to the laws of the universe. Prayer was depersonalized into a tepid state of "being in tune with the infinite," its defenders seizing upon the radio as the nearest parallel to make it plausible to a scientific age. "The living God" was retired to the seclusion of a "First Cause," an object of mental search but no longer a seeker of the lost; and the "living hope" of a life eternal, left to the laboratory tests, came out a colorless belief in the conservation of energy.

Now, however, there is encouraging prospect that the idea of divine grace may break the tyranny of natural

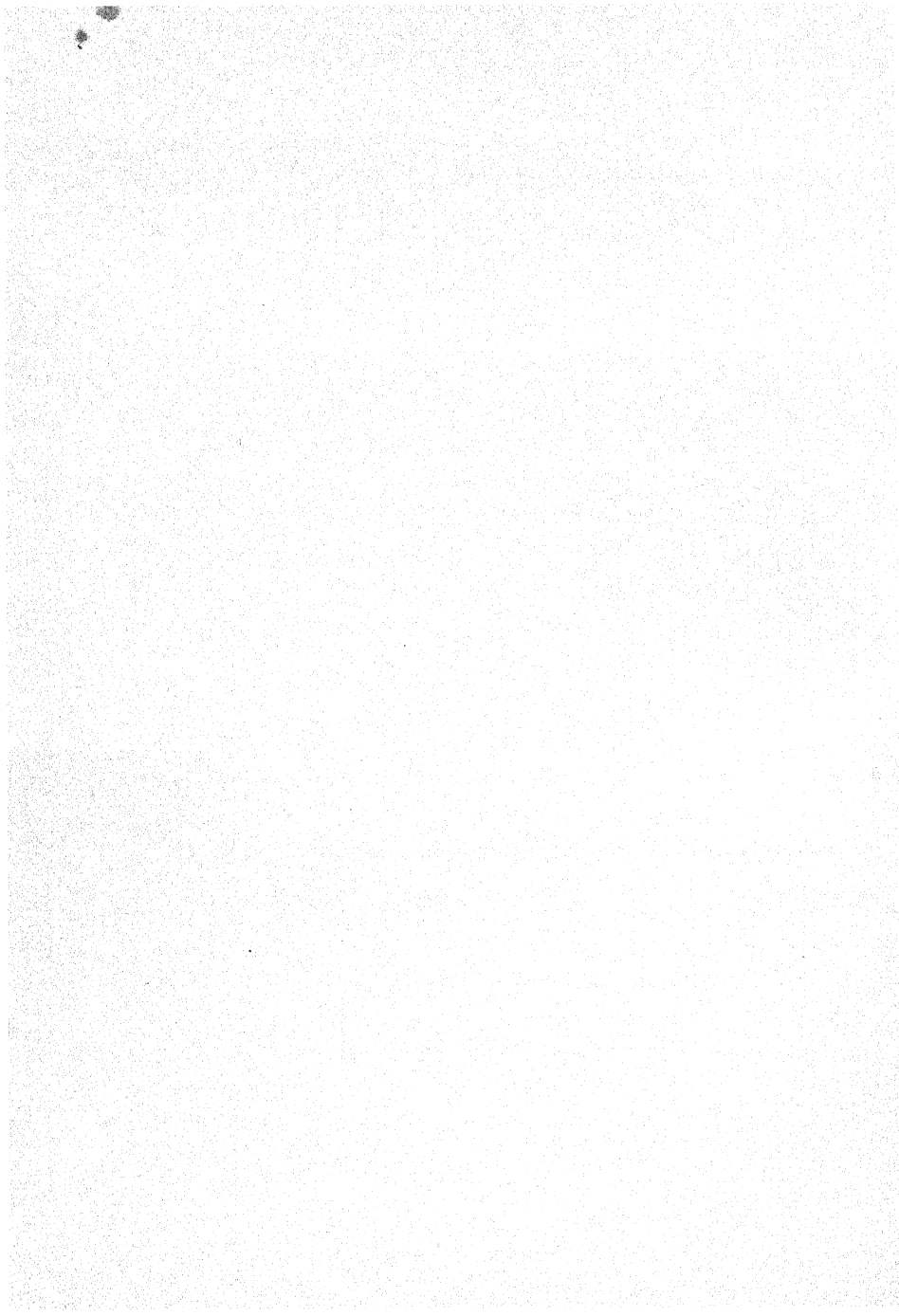
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law. Jeans and Eddington, speaking as physicists, suggest that this universe bears similarities to a musical score as well as to a mathematical equation. Carrel, from his angle of biology, pictures life as more than meat, calling his fellow scientists to explore the more-than-body realm and to pursue the implications of prayer which "open a new world." When from a laboratory of highest medical research comes the statement, "Religious intuition is as real as esthetic inspiration," it gives hope that beauty and goodness may be about to receive a recognition hitherto accorded by modern science only to truth, the other of life's three ultimates. The scientific age which has been so busy measuring the movements of suns and stars may now take time to behold the wonder of sunsets, whose colors cannot be predicted in advance. They are the Creator's extra contribution. Due to law? Yes. But a law larger than justice. A law of love, which is grace.

We venture a prediction: the nineteenth century gave its emphasis to charting the laws of nature, the twentieth century will explore the grace of God. If in our scientific age, as in apostolic time, the study of law prove the tutor which leads to divine grace, then we shall recover the power of God unto salvation.

V. THE RECOVERY OF PREACHING

- 25. The Depression in Preaching
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25. THE DEPRESSION IN PREACHING

IF the recent business panic had run true to precedent, it would have registered a revival of religion visible in church statistics. This, however, did not happen. Inasmuch as this was the first depression since the radio came into use, it is possible that a religious interest was developed which did not register in church attendance. There is no doubt that unnumbered persons have been taking their religion by radio, thus avoiding the financial burdens of church support and the social embarrassment of keeping up with their fellow members.

This costless home consumption of religious messages is in itself, however, an evidence of a certain lack of vital interest. The depth of spiritual concern may well be questioned when the devotees do not care enough to evince their support openly. Making allowance, therefore, for the religious interest which now outruns the precincts of formal public worship, we are forced to the conclusion that the panic of the 1930's has not yet produced a religious revival worthy of the name.

That the Church is less popular than religion requires more than the radio to explain. The reasons which

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would be given by its critics are numerous, sometimes rather contradictory, but frequently very sincere. With many there is the practical business consideration that the churches are expensive, even extravagant organizations, occupying valuable corners and returning to the public less in service than the privileges accorded them. The increasing pressure of taxation serves to irritate the passerby who sees church sites tax-exempt. The Roman Catholic authorities recognize the danger to their vested interests, in any trends toward socialistic or communistic control of government. The smoldering question of church taxation is one which promises to flare up in the near future.

That the underprivileged look upon the churches as the buttress of the propertied class is known by the thoughtful, but probably not realized by the comfortable, occupants of the pews, for they in turn increasingly complain that the pulpits are becoming the platforms of seditious social doctrines. Whereas the Reverend William A. Sunday was wont to refer to the clergy as fire escapes, the leading laymen are now disposed to dub a majority of the preachers as firebrands. Thus we have the Church denounced from without as too conservative and criticized from within as too radical.

More serious, however, is the charge which comes from genuinely socially minded quarters that the Church is not realistic in its outlook and program. Perhaps no group is more indifferent to it than that of social workers. While not echoing the communistic cry that religion is an opiate, they are frank to assert that the organized church does not count in actual social redemp-

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tion. Their view is in line with that expressed by one of Galsworthy's characters: "There is something about a church—a drone, a scent, a half-darkness—there is beauty in it; it is a pleasant drug."

It is easy to answer some of these charges by saying that outside critics are getting only a balcony view of the church, and from the balcony about all a spectator sees is the millinery and the bald spots. The work of the churches, like the coloration of their stained glass windows, must be seen from the inside in order to be appreciated. Enjoyment of religious services, like most of our other better values, is an acquired taste.

Furthermore, it can be said that the improvement of secular life creates a competition for which the Church should not be blamed. In the simpler, cruder days of our grandfathers going to church was an exciting break in the week's monotony. Today, with our highly colored recreations available to rich and poor, the country as well as the city, going to church seems a monotonous break in the week's excitement. The improvement of homes, schools, and public buildings has frequently left churches almost dreary by comparison. Despite the recent impetus in church buildings and the earnest effort at beautification of worship, the physical attractions of religious institutions lag far behind our secular improvements.

A host there are of inside critics not to be silenced by being told that they do not know what the Church does or that they themselves are drawn away by secular competitors. There are those who had a taste for church work and now have lost it. Ears once eager to

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hear the pulpit's message are growing deaf to it. It is little wonder that a young minister in a New England industrial city, with its pleasure-loving populace and its beautiful public buildings, recently looked at his plain meetinghouse, ignored by many residents around it, listlessly served by many members within it, and asked, "Will there be any church forty years from now?"

Unpopular as the Church may appear, we must be frank enough to say that "preaching" is one of its least popular functions. Heywood Broun, the well-known columnist, recently based his daily article on a reader's letter which took him to task for berating "religion, the preachers, and the Supreme Court." Broun answered that the climactic order of the statement reminded him of the anticlimax in the famous slogan, "For God, for country, and for Yale." He defended himself against the charge by saying that he was not an opponent of religion. His criticism of the clergy he repeated. The minister, he argued, who has to strip his soul bare every Sunday, eventually loses his mental and moral modesty. He professionalizes virtue and thereby dulls its sincerity. Moreover, the requirement of delivering a religious message at regular intervals regardless of the speaker's own feeling puts on the preacher a pressure impossible to meet with adequacy. "Perhaps," said Broun, "the pulpit might regain the public respect if the minister who realizes that he has no message on a given Sunday were to rise and frankly announce, 'Maybe next week, but not today.'"

The word "preaching" carries in the popular mind

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an unpleasant flavor of dull moralizing, of paraded virtues, of prying puritanism, of piety put over on others. The idea of it is without relish to minds which pride themselves on their freedom. When a speaker announces that he does not "wish to preach" to his listeners, he at once enlists a more welcome response. Perhaps preaching reached its lowest ebb of popularity when the rector of New York's wealthiest parish proposed a two years' moratorium on its practice. Such a proposal reflected the minor place which the pulpit had come to fill in the complex life of a great city parish, and the public response to the suggestion indicated the low estimate of preaching's value.

Some time ago when a pastor was considering the invitation to a college presidency, a lady of intelligence expressed her surprise that he did not accept, her reason being that in educational work a leader has something which people want, while in the church he is trying to induce them to take something which they do not desire. And so it seems. There is a general clamor for culture; there is not a corresponding concern for religion. Parents sacrifice to send their children to college, but take little effort to encourage their Sunday-school attendance. Youth who flock to universities, seeking the earmarks of culture, desire to erase the labels of religion. It is considered by many even a mark of mental emancipation to come through college without having any church affiliations. We have been passing through a period which has sought culture without religion.

26. FROM SENTIMENTALISM TO REALISM

IF preaching is to recover its prestige, it must first of all be realistic. One virtue on which our post-Victorian society prides itself almost above all others is sincerity. We may boast of some of our vices, but a man never brags about his insincerity. We have tried to strip off the pious upholstery with which earlier consciences covered and cushioned themselves. We are determined to be genuine. We make a veritable fetish of frankness. In literature we have passed from the era of *Little Women* and *When Knighthood Was in Flower* to the vogue of *Main Street* and *True Story* magazines. After the war the Pulitzer Prize juries changed their standards of judging fiction from the requirement that the prize-winning novel should "present the wholesome atmosphere of American life and the highest standards of American manners and manhood." The word "wholesome" was changed to "whole" and the reference to "highest standards" was omitted. H. L. Mencken, high priest for a time of the critics' cult, declared himself "against all theologians, professors, editorial writers, right thinkers, and reformers."

In such a period any literary effort to "put the best foot forward" was sure to receive a kick on the shins from the critics. Any semblance of romantic idealism was scorned as old-fashioned. The tendency was to select all the sordid and seamy features of conduct and

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say, "That's human nature." We would see life in the raw, and rawness became the synonym for realism.

The religious approach to such a period is not by way of whitewash. Preaching must be realistic if it is to be received at all. The pulpit must avoid what Halford Luccock calls the "genteel tradition," which has all too often glossed over the glaring defects of environment in order to keep the sight from hurting the sensitive tastes of refined spirits. It must not repeat the error which, according to Granville Hicks, the formative writers of the 1880's and 1890's committed. Of them he says: "Remote from and insensitive to the dominant tendencies and major needs of American life, they cast a fog of gentility over our literature."¹ The realistic pulpit which is to catch the ear and command the respect of contemporary society can have no convenient "blind spots" in its moral vision nor comfortably avoid any "hot spots" in the human scene.

James Truslow Adams tells us that his boyhood mind was held in spell by the spirit of Emerson's philosophy, but that when he recently reread the Sage of Concord, he discovered that the old wizardry was gone. In explanation, he ascribed the loss of Emerson's power over him to the latter's lack of the sense of tragedy sufficient to speak to our time. However accurate such an appraisal may be, it is clear that no voice can speak with authority to our day unless it can plumb the depths of tragedy. It is said that Schopenhauer wrote with a skeleton in front of him to keep him realistic. The modern preacher or writer needs no such artificial stimulus to realism, for he is surrounded with sufficient

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reminders of dead hopes. We live in a world which Priestley says has banished its gods but kept its devils.

In such a world, the ministers of religion cannot be drum majors strutting blandly ahead of blaring churches through streets lined with social misfits, moral cripples, industrial wrecks, and war victims.

In all fairness, it should be said that many of our ministers have shown a realism which puts to shame some other contemporary voices. Our progressive theological seminaries are centers of far more advanced social thinking than that which pervades the college campus. The pulpits have maintained a freedom in expressing their realistic views which has not been paralleled among university professors, and in our "free" public schools.

It has been shrewdly remarked that there are usually two reasons for every action—namely, a good reason and the real reason. Undoubtedly the pulpit has often been adept in phrasing good reasons for reprehensible situations, but it has also boldly declared the real reasons with sufficient frequency to make saints feel uncomfortable. One handicap of the pulpit is that it is not heard by those critics who are constantly damning it for its cowardice.

Let it be said, too, that people in the pew are there for more genuine reasons than in the past. There may be fewer of them, but those who come do so out of no mere force of habit. Nor do many go to church today for social advancement or political advantage as was frequently the case in former communities. Worshipers come of their own free will. "Religion used to be com-

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pulsory. People conformed to worship because things would happen to them if they did not. Today religion is voluntary. A man is only religious when he wants to be. . . . Religion may be less than it was. But it is genuine, not nominal.”²

Yes, the religious leaders of our day have made a creditable record in their reaction from the opiates of old orthodoxy and the excessive optimism of recent liberalism. In our realism, however, we should remember that it is possible to fool ourselves by believing too little as well as too much. It is not a mark of growing mentality when we interpret wisdom as “getting wise” to things. In reacting from sunny optimism, we should be aware that it is as possible to imagine monsters in the dark as to see mirages in the desert. During the depression a business man, when questioned by an anxious investor about the dangers of inflation which would vitiate our currency, replied in lines which contain more truth than poetry:

“Last night, standing on the stair,
I saw a man who wasn't there;
He wasn't there again today;
O how I wish he'd go away.”

There is a so-called realism which can see bogies and badness quite as frequently as idealism and liberalism can fool themselves with false hopes. We say that love is blind, but it is not half so blind as hate. Eyes sharpened by hate think they “see through” the pretenses of others, but the eyes of love see more. The devoted wife is aware of her husband's weaknesses and foibles;

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but refusing to concede him a "washout," she keeps prospecting on his vein of gold until she brings out the best in him.

Similar was the realism of Jesus. The Master saw life realistically, for he viewed it from a cross and no man can see it more darkly than that. He saw the pompous insincerities of the Pharisees, the dishonesties of the publicans, the impurities of the harlots, the fickle enthusiasms of the crowds—and he knew that was human nature. Yet he saw also the fidelity of servants, the honor of centurions, the loyalty of friends, the gratitude of redeemed Magdalenes—and he knew that too was human nature. Seeing man at his worst, Jesus retained a belief in his redemptibility.

Failure at this point is unchristian realism. We may focus on man's defects until we lose faith and interest in his redemption. We may become so submerged in our realistic thinking that we acquire a sort of submarine outlook. From a submarine one looks chiefly for something to blow up. There is a vast difference between the realist's mania for blowing up and the Master's passion for lifting up. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Our social mood is much like that described in the figure of Isaiah: "It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty." We in America twenty years ago dreamed of warless worlds and societies safe for democracy. We dined richly on the expectations of expanded churches and economic Utopias. As it was said, the stereotype of thought in the

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1920's was, "Whatever is small wants to be large, whatever is poor wants to be rich, whatever is slow wants to be fast, whatever is wants to be more so." We thought we could bring in the Kingdom of God by mere addition. From all this we were cruelly awakened to discover that it was a dream and our souls were empty.

Now we are determined not to be deluded again by dreams. We will keep awake to realities. But wakeful, as well as sleeping, hunger has its delusions if sufficiently prolonged. When human beings begin their day with the bad news of yesterday served on their breakfast tables, spend their working hours amid the selfish contacts of competitive society, and then regale themselves at night with the "realism" of contemporary screen and stage, it is not surprising that such a daily diet develops a jaundiced view quite as discoloring as the roseate lens of romance and idealism.

The deeper danger is that continuance of such a condition may destroy the appetite for whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. When a man has lost his taste for food, it may be realistically honest to show him a picture of a famine sufferer and tell him that such will be his fate if he does not eat. Such a procedure, however, is not half so conducive to the arousal of his appetite as would be the sight and odor of a succulent steak. After all, is not a juicy steak just as real as a starved body? If we are to beget a "hunger and thirst after righteousness," we must beware lest our realism become too bad to be true.

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“Where idealism is derided as lack of objectivity and sympathy is scorned as sentimentality, the result is often a shriveling of that spiritual vitality, which, left to itself, would keep fresh through nature’s vivifying forces.”³

27. FROM A PROFESSIONAL SALESMANSHIP TO A DIVINE CALLING

A COLLEGE president recently said that during the prosperous 1920's the test of a successful alumnus was, "Can you sell it?" but during the jobless 1930's it has been, "Can you take it?" In ministerial circles, it would almost seem that we have reversed this order. The apostolic test of a gospel herald was, "Can you take it?" In our modern mood of efficiency, the measure of a clergyman is his selling ability.

A little thought reveals how largely the preacher's calling has taken on the salesman's technique. The pulpit has studied and copied the latest methods of publicity. Its purpose is "to put it across." The preacher seeks to attract hearers by announcing what the church has to offer, such as good music, cheering fellowship, interesting sermons. The slogan of the church is coming to parallel that of business, "The public be pleased." In seeking to give the crowd what it wants, some churches tend to adopt the working principle of an efficient department store, "The customer is always right." The appeal is a selling appeal. The churches cater to the cult of comfort somewhat in the manner of a certain summer camp which sought to secure prosperous patrons by publishing its booklet under the caption, "Roughing It Smoothly." No doubt soon we shall witness some enterprising pastor advertising his air-conditioned church as "the coolest spot in town."

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One result of this cheapening clerical salesmanship is that it defeats its own end. The church cannot successfully compete with secular agencies as a place of entertainment. It cannot always make good in its offering of services that are "bright, breezy, and brotherly." The crowd whose tastes have become accustomed to the high seasonings of the cinema and jazz is bound to find the ecclesiastical copies of these dull by comparison. The preacher who follows in the footsteps of the popular psychologist and promises to lead his hearers into the paths of health, happiness, and prosperity every Sunday evening will eventually find that road leading to a dead end, and the crowd departing.

A lecturer on psychology may stir a community with a six-weeks' course; a Maurice Evans in his dramatic portrayal of Richard II may pack his house during a whole season; but a minister must remember that he has to go on Sunday after Sunday, year after year. Even the most clever advertising and the most brilliant dramatic ability cannot keep the same people coming indefinitely to hear the same person after his stock in trade has been completely exposed to view.

More serious, however, is the fact that this selling technique defeats the divine end, as well as its own. The preacher's popularity, even while it lasts, too often does not lead men to God, but to the preacher himself. Thus it happens that Protestant churches are frequently known by the names of their preachers. Crowds follow their favorites, and when these die or depart, the churches dwindle. Congregations which come only for

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what they can get are a mere "mob of hermits," and not the Church of Christ.

In thus denouncing the selling methods into which the churches have often descended, we do not wish to give the impression that ministers should make no effort to understand and attract the popular mind.

It is a shortsighted excuse to say, as some do, that a generation which has turned from Wagner to jazz, and from classic art to the Hollywood scenario, is too lacking in taste to appreciate the offerings of sound scholarship and spiritual preaching. It would be wiser, on the church's part, to observe that the trend in genuine art and science is toward democratization and popularization. Our most costly music is now put into modest homes by means of the radio and the victrola. Our science is interpreted in popular terms. Religion must travel in the same direction. It must be democratized without being demoralized; it must be popularized without being cheapened.

In university circles there is a tendency to academic snobbery which holds it a sin against scholarship to popularize one's subject for the crowd. Among ministers there is often the false assumption that the man who draws a crowd must do so by cheapening his product and presentation. There is, however, a secret of attaining simplicity and popularity without sacrificing quality and substance. This formula every preacher should seek. There is also a legitimate and desirable use of advertising which is in line with the Nazarene principle of putting our light on a candlestick that it may give light to all that are in the house. To ignore

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the modernization of method and the popularization of appeal is to manifest the stupidity which Jesus condemned when he said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

In fact the presentation of religion requires a deeper study of the popular taste and mind than does the promotion of secular interests. For the selling of merchandise, one must know what the people want; but in presenting religion, one must understand what the people think they want, and also what they want without knowing it. The church in a very real sense has to create the demand for its own product, and it is this which makes its task most difficult.

The minister of the gospel must, therefore, be more than a salesman disposing of a product. He is an interpreter helping his people to discover what they desire.

The following advice from a seasoned evangelist to a young student preacher is almost worthy of Paul to Timothy: "What you want to do is to think about those people. Then maybe you can make them forget about themselves. That's what they've come for. When you can give it to 'em, you'll be a preacher."¹

When the preacher so forgets himself that he causes his people to forget themselves, then upon them both there begins to dawn the discovery of what they are seeking. The effort to draw people is transformed into an effortless sense of being drawn. The whole professionalized business of preparing sermons, advertising them, getting crowds to hear them and pay for them

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—all that is fused into a fellowship of pastor and people.

The servant of God should rise above the marketplace level as does the true servant of science. Pure science is science pursued for the sake of discovering principles and data without regard to their application or utility. The spirit of it is thus expressed in a recent book by Sir Richard Gregory: "In scientific circles usefulness is never adopted as the standard of value; even if not a single practical result is reached by an investigation, the work is worth doing if it enlarges knowledge or increases our outlook upon the universe." If such is the attitude of pure science, does the theological field have no need for its counterpart in pure theology? Our answer is emphatically "Yes." We say this in full view of the fact that the popular criticism against theological study is on the ground of its uselessness. The pure scientist is a lover of truth for truth's sake. When he by digging in his field discovers a new fact or phenomenon, that to him is a pearl of great price. Regardless of its market value, he revels in sheer joy over the new knowledge. Discoveries like that of phosphorus by Brandt, of sodium by Davy, of chloroform by Soubeiran, seemed at the time never likely to be of the slightest use to anybody. Yet the incentives and the rewards of those discoverers did not wait upon the high commercial appraisal later placed upon their work. They found satisfaction in the achievement itself.

The pure artist loves beauty for beauty's sake. He is thrilled by a sunset whether or not he can capture it on canvas and commercialize it. He does not look for

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the auctioneer's label before he can gauge his enthusiasm for a picture. A thing of beauty is to him its own reason for existence. We do not recall what financial rewards were received by Michelangelo for his Sistine frescoes, or what royalties accrued to Dante for his *Divine Comedy*, or what were the box-office showings at Beethoven's concerts. We do know that these items were not factors in the satisfaction enjoyed by these artists. They did what they did for the joy of doing it. Just as the pure scientist loves truth for truth's sake and the pure artist loves beauty for beauty's sake, so does the pure religionist love God for God's sake. Of course this last-mentioned love includes something of the former two. To him beauty, truth, and goodness are ends in themselves. He is an artist in godliness. He does not ask what is the use of being godly. He enjoys it. He does not inquire what is the value of knowing about God, for he has already found that value in the knowing of Him. He no more needs to ask what is the worth of Christ's relationship to him than a man needs to ask what is the worth of a friendship. The final stage to which Jesus has lifted his disciples was that friendship. "No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends."

Bishop William A. Quayle, whose poetic mysticism lifted him above his parish mechanisms, revealed a secret of his own drawing power when he said: "Preaching is the art of making a sermon and delivering it? Why, no, that is not preaching. Preaching is the art of making a preacher and delivering that. . . . Plainly

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this, the amassing of a great soul, so as to have something worth while to give—the sermon is the preacher up to date.”²

To make and deliver a preacher requires also a sense of divine mission. The date is overdue for a modern, sane, and satisfying book interpreting the meaning of “a call to the ministry.” The traditional interpretations were often unrealistic, even sentimental, relying on a pious urge without an intelligent appraisal of fitness. On the other hand, some modern analyses of the ministerial call are as secular as ordinary vocational guidance. To enter the ministry merely because one has a gift of speech, a love of leadership, and a fondness for working with people is not a proper start for the long pull Godward. Too many preachers are like matches, in that they carry all their brilliance in their own heads, and the first flare soon fades. They lack that sustained incandescence which comes from a current of power surging through them from a greater source.

After a critical survey of his own aptitudes, a candidate for the clerical calling should search his heart for that feeling of divine urgency expressed by Paul, “I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.” To him Christ is not merely the ideal whom he follows, but the One who first followed him.

This consciousness of divine pressure may fluctuate in intensity. Misgivings may cause it to fade in the presence of repeated failures. With some preachers it proves to be one of those morning experiences which “wasteth at noonday.” Some years ago, the writer de-

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livered a sermon on "The Collapses of Middle Age." At the close of the service a district superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church said that he could give him a good illustration for his theme. When he was appointed to his superintendency of preachers in his district, he went to Bishop McDowell, who had designated him, and asked for suggestions as to the way by which he might best serve his young ministers, for he assumed that they would be the ones who had greatest need of his guidance. "Oh, no," replied the Bishop, "it is not the young pastors who will need your assistance most; it is the middle-aged ones, those who see the goals of their youthful expectations receding, those in whom the natural vigor is abating. It is they who have the temptation to loosen the armor of God and slacken the pace of endeavor." How frequently it happens that the sense of divine call grows dim in the dangerous middle years.

On the other hand this awareness of divine apprehension may burst on the minister after many years of self-propelled serving. Of his motivation during his early ministry Horace Bushnell said: "I believed that there is a higher, fuller life that can be lived, and I set myself to attain it." When he was forty-six, however, something happened which shifted his whole conception from a seeking to a calling. One morning he awoke with an inner change of spirit which was reflected in his face. Asked by his wife what he had seen, he replied, "The Gospel." His new attitude, he described thus: "It is not the committing of one's thought in assent to any proposition, but the trusting of one's being,

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there to be rested, kept, guided, molded, governed, and possessed forever.”³

When that sense of divine calling surges through a minister's thought, he knows that new birth into which Nicodemus was invited on a Palestinian housetop nineteen centuries ago.

28. FROM PROPAGANDA TO PROPHECY

WE live in a day deluged with propaganda. Ninety per cent of our press news is said to come from interested sources. So conscious have intelligent people become of this purposeful coloration that they look between the lines for hidden objectives, and steel themselves with the determination that they will not be taken in.¹ Hence it happens that while the unthinking crowd succumbs to propaganda, it is becoming increasingly hard to convince the thoughtful of the sincerity of any appeal. High-grade journals of opinion, therefore, languish for lack of readers, while yellow sheets sweep the light-headed off their feet.

Some years ago the New York *World* ceased publication despite the fact that it had probably the most distinguished editorial personnel in the newspaper field. One interesting explanation of the *World's* financial failure was this, that the paper had emphasized its editorial page to the neglect of its news columns, for, said the critic in substance, the public wants to know what is going on in the world, but it does not wish to be told what it should think about it. Rather a trenchant criticism of the contemporary mood.

It is this temper of mind which explains in part the unpopularity of "being preached to." Among the critical, the pulpit is under the suspicion of trying in the guise of religion to put something over on the unsus-

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pecting pious folk. The public hears frequently that the clergy no longer preach "the simple gospel"; and not informing itself as to what the simple gospel is or what the ministers do actually preach, it spreads the impression that the pulpits are centers of political and social propaganda. Heavy financial batteries are from time to time turned on ecclesiastical organizations, such as the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, blasting them with charges that they are infested with subversive doctrines. Thus it has come about that in the popular mind the Church's message is poisoned with the taint of propaganda to the point where it scarcely has any unsuspecting public.

It must be admitted that some factors in the Church situation lend color to the charge. The pulpit has become a platform from which almost every political, economic, and social interest appeals for support. The broadening interpretation of religion's range brings it into contact with concrete issues, whereupon those sensitively concerned are bound to raise the cry of propaganda. Moreover, the technique of the Church is tending toward a dependence on press-publicized and radio-broadcast sermons. Whereas the earliest church was a company of Christ's friends with no professional workers among them, the typical contemporary church gives the appearance of a professionalized propaganda financed by silent spectators. That is, preachers are paid to deliver sermons and read the Bible for the people, musicians are hired to express their emotions, and in many places evangelists are engaged to recruit

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numbers, while church members themselves merely sit back and pay the bills—and some just sit back.

Unless the Church can lift itself above the methods and message of the propagandists, it is bound to suffer the law of diminishing returns. That happens even now. The per capita cost of evangelizing increases steadily, because the Church has to catch the ear of a populace deafened by the constant barrage of secular propaganda and to overcome the defense mechanism raised against any form of direct appeal. Furthermore, pulpit dogmatism proves irritating as well as ineffective. The pulpit is a protected platform from which the preacher speaks without opportunity of interruption by his hearers. To use such a place of privilege, to put across views on highly controversial concrete issues strikes the listener as a violation of fair play. The result usually is that the hearer reacts in a direction quite the opposite from that desired by the speaker.

In defense the minister may say that to be effective he must take off the gloves of softening generalities and strike with hard fists at specific situations; and that when he does, the sinners naturally squirm. Granted, but let him make it a fair fight. Let him remember also that in our colleges today students are taught by the project method, wherein pupil and professor are fellow seekers after truth and there is a free exchange of views. If the pulpit wishes to command the respect of the college-trained constituents, it too must parallel the project method by providing for the free and fair play between honest differences of opinion.

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Every parish should maintain forums for free discussion of mooted questions involving the concrete application of Christian principles to industry, politics, and similar subjects. In such open arenas the minister can present his views without seeming to violate the rules of fair play. What is more, he can gain the benefit of hearing what his laymen think. There is a bit of elephantine wisdom which came to the writer out of his boyhood reading. An elephant, chained in his barn, saw a morsel of hay which lay beyond the range of his tether. How could he get it? This is what he did. He blew against the side of the barn and the current of air coming back brought the bundle of hay to him. In that there is a homely parable for the preacher. Sometimes what comes back to us from our parishioners brings the Bread of Life more closely within our own reach.

Along with these forums for discussion should go a revived cultivation of the pastoral relationship. The preacher must gain the confidence of his congregation through personal friendship, if he would win the acceptance of his message. When a minister secures the friendship of persons, he will find them listening respectfully to messages with which they do not agree; but if he does not win their individual interest, he will find them soon sniffing skeptically at almost any ideas presented.

On this fact lies the superior effectiveness of the pastor preacher over the radio pulpiteer, as well as over the traveling evangelist. With the increasing burdens and

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complexity of parish management there has come the suggestion that the ministry of tomorrow will be divided into two groups: on the one hand, the managers of the local parishes, and on the other the prophets who will live in cloistered, studious atmosphere whence they will emerge to do the preaching. Such a division of duties would not make a dynamic ministry. Personal friendship between preacher and people is the only solvent in which continuously effective messages can be transmitted.

Such observations should serve to remind us of Jesus' own method. Jesus did not dash up and down Palestine as one tensely bent on putting across a program, or as a propagandist hurling his ideas at the heads of his hearers. John the Baptist had something of that appearance about him. The Master's methods were so unlike John's that the latter began to doubt his Messiahship. Jesus went about healing men by the side of the road, mingling with guests at weddings, stopping to soothe the mourners in stricken homes. The shadow of his influence fell on a woman by the well and her life was changed. He dined with an outcast publican and brought salvation to his house. He stood in the presence of a woman about to be stoned for her sin. What an occasion that would have been to proclaim his Kingdom platform on purity. Jesus did not preach. For a time he did not even talk. He simply stooped and drew designs in the sand. Yet his personality so overshadowed the Magdalene and her accusers that the crowd melted away and the woman's sin with it. Jesus put personality before propaganda or program.

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This Nazarene attitude leads us to a deeper distinction between the propagandist and the prophet of God. The former focuses his attention on the cause he is promoting; the latter's primary concern is with the personalities affected by the cause. The propagandist is interested in people as aids to his movement; the prophet is interested in the movement as aids to people. Jesus always treated persons as ends, never as means. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The Roman centurion was a person in whom the Master was interested, and not a mere case to illustrate the true type of faith. The generous and grateful woman with her expensive ointment was treated as an end in herself and not as a means to demonstrate the proper uses of charity.

Like his Lord, the prophet of God is not to "sacrifice personalities on the altar of principles." In this regard the minister might well profit by observing the technique of the physician. The doctor does not enter a sickroom as the exponent of a particular school of medicine or curative principle. His primary concern is for the patient, and he treats each case with a meticulous regard for its own individuality. Then to that individual he brings the aid of his scientific theories. The minister of religion is committed to the cure of souls and as such he is a doctor of humanity. (It might be said here that to become a doctor of humanity is more difficult than to become a doctor of divinity. For the former, one must cultivate all classes and conditions of men, while for the latter he need cultivate only one college presi-

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dent.) When a preacher's first interest is to put across an idea or a program, he is a propagandist; when it is to help persons by means of an idea or program, then he is a prophet of God. It does not usually take a community long to find out which he is.

There is a still deeper difference between the role of propagandist and prophet. The former calls God in to help him promote a cause, the latter uses a cause to serve the Kingdom of God. Many movements are trying to use God; few are willing to be used of Him. Surrounded by good causes, each calling for help, the minister may easily parallel the earnest but un-co-ordinated enthusiast of Stephen Leacock's description who "mounted his horse and rode off in all directions." Such ecclesiastical Don Quixotes fall into the error which Chesterton has termed "the idolatry of the intermediate to the oblivion of the ultimate."

Take, for example, the movement for consumers' co-operatives, which has so many features seemingly in accord with the Christian program. It is one thing for the preacher to use his church as a recruiting center for the co-operatives; it is quite another to utilize the co-operative program as a secondary assistant to the Christlike regeneration of a community. The prophet of God keeps his perspective by trying to "see life steadily and see it whole."

Or consider the cause of world peace, than which there would seem to be nothing closer to the will of God. Though central this issue, it is possible for a preacher to lose his sense of proportion and dull the

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interest of his hearers by a steady diet of peace sermons. The eradication of our greatest single social sin, war, involves long educational effort, and to keep it from going stale the peace movement must be presented in the well-rounded setting of a general Christian program. This is the invaluable service which the Church renders to peace organizations, and it must not be forfeited by allowing the prophets of God to be narrowed into peace propagandists.

The preacher stands at the meeting place of specialties. He must take care to keep close enough to the center so that he avoids those partial views to which the specialist is prone. By preserving a wholeness of view he will render an invaluable service to the causes which call for his assistance. Toward this preservation of perspective, the liturgical observance of the church year lends its aid. By keeping the preaching program Christocentric, it serves to prevent the themes from running off on such prolonged tangents that they do not get back until congregations have lost interest. While such liturgical guidance may make the dull preacher still more dull, it will steer the resourceful minister without stifling him.

In recovering from propaganda to prophecy, perhaps the Church needs to clarify its conception of what constitutes prophetic preaching. It seems to be commonly assumed that prophetic utterances are distinguished by the preacher's courage of convictions, the sternness of his manner, and the somberness of his message. All these features usually do mark a prophet when he is

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speaking for God to a generation as godless as ours. Still these are not the essence of the prophet. The test lies in the objectives of his message. The true prophet treats both God and men as ends rather than means. Thus he propagates the faith, yet is more than a propagandist.

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CHAPTER 27

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CHAPTER 28

¹ Significant is the recent formation of The Institute for Propaganda Analysis, with this statement of purpose: "It will conduct a continuous survey and analysis of propagandas. By objective and scientific scrutiny of the agencies, techniques, and devices utilized in the formation of public opinion, it will seek to show how to recognize propaganda and appraise it."